# GEORGE WASHINGTON

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# GEORGE WASHINGTON

BY

WILLIAM H. RIDEING
AUTHOR OF
"MANY CELEBRITIES AND A FEW OTHERS"
"THE BOYHOOD OF FAMOUS AUTHORS," ETC.

"Art to his fame no aid hath lent;
His country is his monument."

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# GEORGE WASHINGTON

## CHAPTER I

### Washington's Boyhood

George Washington was born at Bridge's Creek in Virginia on the 22d of February, 1732, and was the fifth son of Augustine Washington, a planter, descended from an old English family, one of whom, his great-grandfather, came to America in reduced circumstances in 1656 as "second man in sayleing ye vessel to Virginia."

Not much is known of George Washington's infancy and boyhood. His education may be said to have been neglected; and though possessed of more than ordinary common sense, he had little schooling. He was a serious sort of boy, ambitious, courageous, and industrious; particularly courageous, as he soon showed while still a mere stripling, in games, in the hunting field, and in Indian wars, and he was notably industrious also.

Sagacity was his strongest quality and was to serve him in various crises in his later life.

Tall, rather "raw-boned," earnest, acquisitive, observant, he foreshadowed in his boyhood the steadiness and consistency, the calmness and the resolution of his manhood.

Much of his time was spent on the estate of Mount Vernon on the Potomac, which he afterwards inherited from his elder brother, Lawrence, and there he learned the business of a planter. Under his management Mount Vernon became one of the finest estates in the country. The principal crop was tobacco, as it was of all other large estates.

While his eldest brother was sent to England to be educated and came back a scholar, George was allowed to pick up such chance knowledge as he could, and one of the few books he cared for was "The Young Man's Companion," which claimed to be a self-instructor in nearly everything, a sort of encyclopedia, which taught, or pretended to teach, how to prepare wills, deeds, and all legal forms; how to build houses; how to survey and navigate; how to doctor the sick; how to make ink and cider; and how to behave. In fact, it was little more than a scrapbook.

George was always a well-behaved boy, and

truthful, but the story of the cherry tree is probably one of the many inventions concerning this period of his life.

His weakest point was his spelling, and not even when he was grown up did he acquire correctness in it. To the last he spelled lie, lye; Latin, latten; rifle, riffle; oil, oyle; and blue, blew. A friend wrote of him that "his writing was defective in grammar and even spelling, owing to the insufficiency of his early education, of which, however, he gradually got the better in the subsequent years of his life, by the official perusal of some excellent models, particularly those of Alexander Hamilton; by writing with care and persistent attention, and reading numerous, indeed multitudes, of letters, to and from his friends and correspondents."

And he himself was fully aware of his deficiencies. When it was suggested to him that he should prepare his autobiography, he said, "A consciousness of a defective education and a certainty of the want of time, unfit me for such an undertaking."

All the more wonderful was it that he acquired before he was middle-aged a power of expression, always rich in simple dignity and charm, which reminds one of the speeches and writings of Abraham Lincoln.

His school days ended when he was fourteen

years old. He wanted to go to sea, as thousands of other boys have done, but in this he was opposed by his mother and by an uncle, who said in old-fashioned phrases, "I think he had better be put apprentice to a tinker, for a common sailor before the mast has by no means the liberty of the subject, for they will press him from a ship where he has fifty shillings a month, and make him take twenty-three, and cut and slash, and use him like a negro, or rather like a dog."

He had gathered from "The Young Man's Companion" a smattering knowledge of surveying and had taken a few lessons from a surveyor, so he abandoned his dream of the sea, and worked for four years at the surveyor's profession, going into the wilderness which stretched from his home, and becoming familiar with the Indians who abounded in it.

"Nothing was left half done, or done in a hurried or slovenly manner," says Washington Irving. "The habit of mind then cultivated continued throughout; so that however complicated his tasks and overwhelming his cares, in the arduous and hazardous situations in which he was often placed, he found time to do everything, and to do it well. He had acquired the magic of method, which of itself works wonders."

The hardships of his life as a surveyor in the wilderness are shown in his own diary, from which we quote a few entries:

"Friday, March 11th, 1747: — Began my journey in company with George Fairfax, Esq., we travelled this day forty miles, to Mr. George Marvel's in Prince William County.

"March 12th: — Rode to his Lordship's quarters some miles higher up the river. We went through most beautiful groves of sugar-trees, and spent the best part of the day in admiring the trees and richness of the land.

"March 23d: — Rained till about two o'clock, and then cleared up, when we were agreeably surprised at the sight of more than thirty Indians, coming from war with only one scalp. After clearing a large space and making a great fire in the middle, the men seated themselves around it, and the speaker made a grand speech, telling them in what manner they were to dance. After he had finished, the best dancer jumped up, as one awakened from sleep, and ran and jumped about the ring in the most comical manner. He was followed by the rest. Then began their music which was performed with a pot half full of water, and a deerskin stretched tight over it, and a gourd with some shot in it to rattle, and a

piece of horse's tail tied to it to make it look fine. One person kept rattling, and another drumming all the while they were dancing.

"April 2d: — A blowing, rainy night. Our straw upon which we were lying took fire, but I was luckily preserved by one of our men awakening when it was in a flame.

"April 3d: — Last night was a much more blustering night than the former. We had our tent carried quite off with the wind, and were obliged to lie the latter part of the night without covering. There came several persons to see us this day. One of our men shot a wild turkey.

"April 4th: — This morning Mr. Fairfax left us with intent to go down to the mouth of the river. We did two lots and were attended by a great company of people — men, women and children — that attended us through the woods as we went, showing their antic tricks. Several think they seem to be as ignorant a set of people as the Indians. They would never speak English, but when spoken to they speak all Dutch. This day over, our tent was blown down by the violentness of the wind.

"April 6th: — Last night was so intolerably smoky that we were obliged, all hands, to leave the tent to the mercy of the wind and fire. This

day was attended by our company until about twelve o'clock, when we finished. We travelled down the Branch to Henry Danmetries'. On our journey were caught in a very heavy rain; we got under a straw house until the worst of it was over, and then continued our journey.

"April 7th: — Rained excessively all last night. This morning one of our men killed a wild turkey that weighed twenty pounds. We went to survey fifteen hundred acres of land, and returned to Danmetries' about one o'clock. About two I heard that Mr. Fairfax was come up and at Peter Capsey's, about two miles off in the same old field. I then took my horse and went up to see him. We ate our dinner and walked down to Danmetries'. We stayed about two hours, and walked back again and slept in Capsey's house, which was the first night I had slept in a house since I came to the Branch.

"April 8th: — We camped in the woods, and after we had pitched our tent and made a large fire we pulled out our knapsack to recruit ourselves. Every one was his own cook. Our spits were forked sticks; our plates were large chips. As for dishes we had none."

In a letter to a friend he wrote: "Since you received my letter of October last I have not

slept above three or four nights in a bed, but, after walking a good deal all the day, I have lain down before the fire upon a little hay, straw, fodder, or a bearskin, whichever was to be had, with man, wife, and children, like dogs and cats; and happy is he who gets the berth nearest the fire. Nothing would make it pass off tolerably but a good reward. A doubloon is my constant gain every day that the weather will permit of my going out, and sometimes six pistoles. The coldness of the weather will not allow of my making a long stay, as the lodging is rather too cold for the time of year. I have never had my clothes off, but have lain and slept in them, except the few nights I have been in Fredericktown."

Washington was a magnificent horseman. His father had taken a great deal of pride in his blooded horses, and his mother afterward took pains to keep the stock pure. She had several young horses that had not yet been broken, and one of them in particular, a sorrel, was extremely spirited. No one had been able to do anything with it, and it was pronounced thoroughly vicious, as people are apt to pronounce horses which they have not learned to master. George was determined to ride this colt, and told his companions that if they would help him catch it, he would ride and tame it.

Early in the morning they set out for the pasture, where the boys managed to surround the sorrel and then to put a bit into its mouth. Washington sprang upon its back, the boys dropped the bridle, and away flew the angry animal. Its rider at once began to command; the horse resisted, backing about the field, rearing and plunging. The boys became thoroughly alarmed, but Washington kept his seat, never once losing his self-control or his mastery of the colt. The struggle was a sharp one; when suddenly, as if determined to rid itself of its rider, the creature leaped into the air with a tremendous bound. It was its last. The violence burst a blood-vessel, and the noble horse fell dead.

Before the boys could sufficiently recover to consider how they should extricate themselves from the scrape, they were called to breakfast; and the mistress of the house, knowing that they had been in the fields, began to ask after her stock.

"Pray, young gentlemen," said she, "have you seen my blooded colts in your rambles? I hope they are well taken care of. My favorite, I am told, is as large as his sire."

The boys looked at one another, and no one liked to speak. Of course the mother repeated her question.

"The sorrel is dead, madam," said her son. "I killed him!"

And then he told the whole story. They say that his mother flushed with anger, as her son often used to, and then, like him, controlled herself, and presently said, quietly: —

"It is well; but while I regret the loss of my favorite, I rejoice in my son who always speaks the truth."

I have borrowed this story from Mr. Horace Scudder, who tells it in his little book on Washington. It may not be wholly true, but it is characteristic. That is to say, it exhibits the boy as we know he was from other circumstances.

He was strict with himself as with others, a self-disciplinarian; an athlete who exercised himself with running, leaping, wrestling, pitching quoits, tossing ball, and fox hunting.

Lord Fairfax, an English nobleman who had made Virginia his home, was a neighbor and a friend, who employed him as surveyor, and gave him the advantages of polite society, including association with all the prettiest and most talented young ladies in the neighborhood.

"This old nobleman," Mrs. Burton Harrison says of Lord Fairfax, in one of her delightful essays, "had come out to live in the Virginian wilderness

in the prime of his manhood, and abandoning his beautiful home of Leeds Castle in Kent, England, and other estates, contented himself with ruling over a principality of land inhabited chiefly by a few backwoodsmen, a few scattered families, many prowling and bloody-minded Indians and vast abundance of big game.

"His lodge of Greenway Court, not far from the present town of Winchester, was an abode of delight to the boy Washington, who was frequently bidden there to stay. In the dining room of the writer of these lines hang two large plates of old Oriental china, part of a set once presented by Washington to Lord Fairfax on his arrival at Greenway Court for one of these many visits.

"From Lord Fairfax he received color and influence in many matters relating to literature, culture, and the science of diplomacy in foreign courts. In a thousand ways their sympathies touched, and through all the talks, when Washington stood fast for the colonies, Lord Fairfax for the crown, they kept their friendship intact.

"Most schoolboys know the touching story of how the news of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis came to the old baron, as he sat by the chimney corner in his great lodge brooding over the trend

of public events. When convinced that America was forever free from England's rule, and, worse than all, that it was the lad he had helped to train to whom the British commander at Yorktown had surrendered an army, he at first said nothing. After a while he turned to Black Joe, his body-servant, exclaiming plaintively: —

"'Take me to my bed, Joe! It is time for me to die.'"

Washington's father was already dead, and his older brother, Lawrence, took the father's place, and played it well.

His mother lived nearly as long as George himself, and to her he was invariably a devoted son. In writing to her he always addressed her as "Respected Madam," and signed himself "Your Dutiful Son."

He adopted, as a guide to conduct, "Rules for Behavior" which are worth quoting and worth learning: —

"Every action in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those present.

"In the presence of others sing not to yourself with humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

"Be not a flatterer, neither play with any one that delights not to be played with.

"Let your countenance be pleasant, but in serious matters somewhat grave.

"Show not yourself glad of the misfortune of another though he were your enemy.

"Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive.

"Wherein you reprove another, be unblamable yourself; for example is more prevalent than precept.

"Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for it is a sign of a tractable and commendable nature; and in all causes of passion, admit reason to govern.

"Be not forward, but friendly and courteous; the first to salute, hear and answer; and be not pensive when it is time to converse.

"Detract not from others, neither be excessive in commending.

"Associate yourself with men of good quality, if you esteem your own reputation, for it is better to be alone than in bad company.

"In disputes, be not so desirous to overcome, as not to give liberty to each one to deliver his opinion; and submit to the judgment of the major part, especially if they are judges of the dispute.

"Play not the peacock, looking everywhere about you to see if you be well decked, if your

shoes fit well, if your stockings set neatly, and your clothing handsomely.

"Think before you speak; pronounce not imperfectly, nor bring out your words too hastily, but orderly and distinctly.

"Undertake not what you cannot perform, but be careful to keep your promise.

"Let your recreations be manful, not sinful.

"Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called Conscience."

## CHAPTER II

### Life in Old Virginia

We must remember that at this time America was a very different country from what it is to-day. The United States were not yet on the map. Instead of the forty-eight states we have now there were but thirteen, and the population of the whole country was nearly three million fewer than the population of the City of New York alone is now. There were no great cities, no railways, no telegraphs or telephones, no steamers, no electric or gas lights. Towns were far apart and small; the plains and prairies had not been explored; the Indians roamed in the primeval forests, a constant terror to the settlers.

"Of the inventions and discoveries which abridge distance, which annihilate time, which extend commerce, which aid agriculture, which save labor, which transmit speech, which turn the darkness of night into the brilliance of day, which alleviate pain, which destroy disease, which lighten even the infirmities of age, not one existed."

A narrow line of towns and villages extended, with many breaks, along the coast from the province of Maine to Georgia. The fishermen's cottages were built of roughhewn logs and thatched with seaweed. The valleys of the Mohawk and the Genesee were the hunting grounds of the Oneida Indians, the Mohawks, and the Cayugas. Daniel Boone was fighting the Cherokees in the canebrakes of Kentucky.

As late as 1795 Cincinnati consisted of ninety-five log cabins and five hundred persons.

Occasionally a trapper appeared on the frontier, who told of the mysterious plains beyond, where the grass grew higher than his waist, where flowers were more beautiful than in the best kept garden, and where the Indians looked on the white man as a god or a devil.

Most of the furniture in the houses was imported from England and was of a simple and solid kind. The homes themselves often had a mean appearance, and were neither sanitary nor comfortable. Light was derived from homemade candles, heat from cavernous open fireplaces and logs. There were no carpets or rugs on the floors. Food and clothing of the average family were both frugal and coarse.

A well-to-do father of to-day, says John Bach

McMaster, the historian, spends every year on his family as much as would have in those days defrayed the public expenses of a flourishing village; schoolmaster, constable, and highways included.

Children at school had a hard time too. Indeed, the teacher who in our day subjected his pupils to the rigid discipline, to the hard fare, to the sermons, the prayers, and the floggings which then fell to the lot of the schoolboy, would be held up by the press to universal execration, and might count himself fortunate if he escaped without a prosecution by a society for the prevention of cruelty to children, for schoolmasters knew of no way of imparting knowledge but by the rod.

But schools were few, and sometimes to reach them children had to walk for miles through regions infested with wolves and bears.

People traveled afoot, on horseback, in private carriages or in public coaches. The trip between New York and Philadelphia, which by train now takes two hours, then took by stage coach three days! Any man who had been in Europe was pointed at in the city streets. He had to travel, of course, in a sailing ship, and the voyage often took three months instead of five days, which the *Mauretania* takes now.

Virginia was better off than New England, and

its rich planters lived in greater luxury. They found much difficulty in getting enough servants to work their estates, and slaves from Africa were introduced. That was the beginning of slavery in this country, and though Washington was disposed to get rid of it, he, like all his neighbors, acquiesced in what was regarded as a necessity.

He never in his life bought or sold a slave; those he had he inherited. His position is stated by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge as follows: "Washington accepted the condition as he found it, as most men accept the social arrangement to which they are born. He grew up in a world where slavery had always existed, and where its rightfulness had never been questioned. Humane by nature, he conceived a great interest and a great pity for those helpless beings, and treated them with kindness and forethought. In a word, he was a kind and good master, as well as a successful one, and the condition of his slaves was as happy, and their labors as profitable, as was possible to such a system . . . Washington became convinced that the whole system was thoroughly bad, as well as utterly repugnant to the ideas upon which the revolution was fought and the government of the United States founded.

"When he died he did all that lay in his power to impress his views upon his countrymen by directing that his slaves should be set free on the death of his wife. His opinions were those of a humane man impatient of wrong, and of a noble and farseeing statesman, watchful of the evils that threatened his country."

Until long after the year 1732, the people of Virginia reckoned the cost of things, not by pounds, shillings, and pence — the English currency — but by pounds of tobacco — the Virginia currency. The salaries of the clergy were paid in tobacco, as were the fees for christening, marrying, and burying. Taxes were paid and accounts kept in tobacco.

You could easily mistake for a village the groups of buildings on one plantation. When you looked closer you would find no church, shop, or schoolhouse, only the buildings of the plantation, the house of the planter, the tobacco house, in which the tobacco was drying, and the cabins of the negroes, low wooden huts, the chinks in the walls filled with clay.

The tobacco crop was uncertain, now good, now bad, and the planter was never sure of his income, so he became reckless and was often in debt. He usually was extravagant and entertained lavishly,

inviting any stranger at the inn to his house and keeping him there for days or weeks.

He seldom traveled, except to the little capital, Williamsburg, when the House of Burgesses was in session there. Then he got out his great yellow coach and drove in state with his family through the rough roads and the woods, meeting other planters and their wives and daughters going in the same direction. At the capital there were balls and dinners, all the ceremonies of society, and much talk of politics. They had good times, and then returned in high spirits to their home, where the mother would take up again the exacting round of her duties.

Her hands were always full; she could not escape her thousand and one duties. Having no shops near, she had to provide herself in advance with all household necessaries. Often she taught her children, for no school was near. She had to supervise and train her numerous servants, setting one to sewing, another to mending, another to weaving. Most of the garments and all the fabrics used by the family and the servants were homemade, and the mistress also nursed and prescribed for all who were ill.

A lady who visited such a home and such a mistress thus describes her: "On one side sits

the chambermaid with her knitting; on the other, a little colored pet learning to sew; an old decent woman is there with her table and shears, cutting out the negroes' winter clothes; while the old lady directs them all, incessantly knitting herself. She points out to me several pairs of nice, colored stockings and gloves she has just finished, and presents me with a pair half done, which she begs I will finish and wear for her sake."

In their mansion, the Washingtons lived with some luxury and not a little state. They were counted as aristocrats by their neighbors, and welcomed by the splendid Fairfaxes, who stood highest in the social scale. King George of England still reigned over the country, and the states of the future were but English colonies with a loosening attachment to the English crown. Virginia was prosperous, but the country was undeveloped and its richness only dimly surmised.

We catch glimpses of our George at smart assemblies, fond of dancing, fond of the pretty girls, and fond of fine raiment. He was in fact something of a dandy, sending to London for his clothes. On one occasion he orders six pairs of the "very neatest shoes," one "suit of the finest cloth and fashionable color," "three gold and

scarlet sword knots," and "one fashionable gold-laced hat."

"Whatever goods you may send me, let them be neat and good of their several kinds," he wrote to his London tailor.

But he was no idler or trifler. He studied hard and was methodic in all he did. At a very early age he kept accounts of his expenditures and of how he spent his time, in order to check waste in both. He was, as we have said, fully conscious of his deficiency in education, and sought to make up for it in all possible ways, especially in the study of mathematics. To this day the surveys he made for Lord Fairfax and others are considered good and valid.

Now, however, he was to give up surveying and to enter on that military career in which he was soon to become famous.

## CHAPTER III

### The Young Soldier

Washington was born with an hereditary taste for soldiering; many of his ancestors had fought for England, and his brother Lawrence served in the West Indies under that Admiral Vernon whose name was afterwards given to the estate in Virginia. Irving says that "all his amusements took a military turn. He made soldiers of his schoolmates. They had their mimic parades, reviews, and sham fights. A boy named William Bustle was sometimes his competitor, but George was commander-in-chief of the school."

The French were in possession of Canada, and were scheming to take away from the English large parts of their land, claiming all the country between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi. They sent expeditions from Canada to the southern shores of Lake Erie, and from the South, and established forts at Presque Isle, where the city of Erie now stands, and at Venango on the Alle-

gheny River. They were also enlisting the Indians to fight for them.

Then it was that Washington, only twenty-one years old, was appointed as an emissary to them with the rank of major, and he set forth into the wilderness to meet the Chevalier St. Pierre, the French commandant. His footsteps were dogged by hostile Indians, and more than once he was almost ambushed. So successful was he that he at once became, as Irving says, "the rising hope of Virginia."

The expedition was full of peril. "For seven hundred and fifty miles, more than half the distance through an unbroken wilderness, accompanied by only seven persons, he made his way to the Ohio," says Mr. J. T. Headley. "Across rivers and morasses, over mountains, through fearful gorges and amid tribes of Indians, the fearless stripling pursued his way, and at length, after forty-one days of toil, reached, in the middle of December, the end of his journey. Having concluded his mission, he set out in the dead of winter to retrace his dreary route. The horses, after a while, gave out, and the drivers were left to take care of them, while Washington and a comrade named Gist rushed on alone on foot through the wilderness. With his knapsack on

his back and his gun in his hand, he made his way through the deep snow and over the frozen ground, without a path to guide his footsteps or a sound to waken the solitude, save the groaning of trees swinging to and fro in the storm, or the cry of some wild animal in search of prey. Traveling in this manner, they came upon an Indian, who, under the pretense of acting as guide, led them off their route and then shot at them. Sparing his life, contrary to the wishes of his friend, Washington got rid of him, and walked all night to escape pursuit.

"Coming to the Allegheny River, they found it only partly frozen over, and here the two friends lay down on the cold snow, with nothing but their blankets over them; and thus weary and hungry passed the dreary night. The next morning they set to work with a single hatchet to build a raft, on which they might cross the river. They worked all day long on the frail thing, and just after sundown succeeded in launching it on the turbulent stream. When nearly halfway across, huge fragments of floating ice came driving down the current, and jamming against the crazy fabric of logs, bore it downward and onward, threatening at every moment to carry it straight to the bottom.

"Young Washington thrust his long setting pole firmly in the ground in front of the raft, in order to stop it till the ice and driftwood could pass by, but instead of arresting them, he was jerked overboard into ten feet of water, where he had to swim for his life. Unable to keep the raft, the two adventurers swam and waded to an island near which they were passing; here amid forest and snow, wet to the skin, without a dry garment to wrap themselves in, or a blanket to cover them, or a spark of fire to warm their benumbed limbs — with their clothes frozen stiff upon their backs, they passed the long, cold, wintry night.

"Young Gist had his feet and hands frozen, while Washington, with his greater power of endurance, escaped.

"They were now without the means of reaching either shore, but the biting cold that benumbed their hands and froze stiff the hands and feet of Gist, froze also the river with ice between them and the shore they wished to gain. Escaping the shot of the Indian, the dangers of the frost, and death from cold, they at length, after an absence of eleven weeks, arrived safely at home.

"When in the imagination I behold this youth in his Indian days, his knapsack on his back and

his gun in his hand, stealing through the snow-covered forest at midnight, or plunging about in the wintry stream in the struggle for life, or wrapped in his blanket sleeping beside the ice-filled river, lulled by its sullen roar, I seem to behold one whom angels guard through the desperate training which can alone fit him for the stern trials that are before him."

And after all this suffering, St. Pierre's answer proved unsatisfactory, so a second expedition, under Colonel Joshua Fry, was formed to take active measures against the French, with Washington as second in command. He now ranked as lieutenant colonel, and through the death of Colonel Fry became chief of the forces. After several engagements he was obliged to surrender at Fort Necessity, near Fort Duquesne, which stood on the present site of Pittsburg, being outnumbered four to one, yet in face of this defeat he covered himself with glory by his strategy and by his courage and resourcefulness. The legislature of Virginia recognized him in a vote of thanks.

The trouble between the French and the colonists grew, and England, the mother country, awoke to the necessity of stronger measures. She sent out troops in command of Major General

Edward Braddock, and with him expected to make short work of her foes. Braddock himself was confident and over-confident. He was a brave man, but he misunderstood the task he had undertaken. Warfare on the frontier was a very different thing from warfare as he knew it. The British miscalculated, much as they miscalculated in the Boer war more than a century later, but the colonists themselves stood in awe of the trained soldiers who had come to their support.

Braddock was haughty and overbearing and unwilling to listen to advice. He would have his own way in all things.

However, he enlisted Washington as an aide, and treated him civilly enough, though often rejecting his advice. Washington, after the previous expedition, had retired to Mount Vernon and was devoting himself to the cultivation of the estate.

"The din and stir of warlike preparations disturbed the quiet," says Irving. "Washington looked down from his rural retreat upon the ships of war and transports, as they passed up the Potomac, with the array of armor gleaming along their decks. The booming of cannon echoed among his groves. Alexandria was but a few miles distant. Occasionally, he mounted his horse

and rode to that place; it was like a garrisoned town, teeming with troops, and resounding with the fife and the drum. A brilliant campaign was about to open under the auspices of an experienced general, and with all the means and appurtenances of European warfare. How different from the starveling expeditions he had hitherto been doomed to conduct! What an opportunity to efface the memory of his recent disaster! All thoughts of rural life were put to flight. The military part of his character was again in the ascendant; his great desire was to join the expedition as a volunteer."

He marched away with Braddock's army, full of hope at the beginning, but soon saw its defects. It was quite unfitted for the work before it and frontier conditions. It lacked mobility and was overweighted with unnecessary and inappropriate equipment. It moved slowly. Had Braddock taken the advice of his youthful aide, disaster might have been avoided, but at Fort Duquesne the British and Americans were routed and the general mortally wounded.

In his last moments the general apologized to Washington for the petulance with which he had rejected his advice and bequeathed to him his favorite charger and his faithful mulatto servant,

William Bishop. Washington had again distinguished himself by his courage. Three horses were shot under him, and four bullets passed through his coat.

"I heard the bullets whistle, and there is something charming in the sound," are the words attributed to him.

The story of the expedition is so interesting that perhaps we had better repeat it with fuller details.

So great was the confidence of General Braddock in the outcome of the expedition that he said to Benjamin Franklin, "After taking Fort Duquesne, I am to proceed to Niagara, and after having taken that, to Frontenac, if the season will allow time, and I suppose it will, for Duquesne can hardly detain me above three or four days; and then I can see nothing to obstruct my march to Niagara."

"To be sure, sir," Franklin replied, though he had misgivings.

So they set out, part of the way through the clearings Washington had made on his previous expedition. The army, a narrow column, was four miles from the van to the rear, and was impeded by the weight of its own equipment. It mustered more than two thousand men, and had before it mile after mile of mountain and valley,

forest and swamp, most of the way without a footprint or a trail to guide it. Once they found that after four days of toil they had covered only twelve miles!

When at last they were within eight miles of Duquesne, they were attacked by an advance guard of the French in ambush. These spread themselves within the shelter of the forest, and from their covert poured upon them a deadly fire.

"God save the King," cried the English and the colonists, for the king was the king of both at that time, and they got to cover as well as they could. Washington besought Braddock to scatter them, but Braddock, who had had no experience of this kind of fighting, persisted in exposing them in the open. Little chance they had against the French who, unseen, assailed them with a continuous fire from behind the trees and thickets, and among the French were six hundred Indian warriors who fought like fiends.

Washington had been very ill and could hardly keep in his saddle, but when the battle began he seemed instantly to recover, and flung himself into the fight with the greatest spirit. He exposed himself with an utter indifference to every danger, and had, as we have said, three horses shot under him. He escaped without a wound. But only

a remnant of the troops survived when they began their retreat — less than five hundred of the thirteen hundred engaged. "Retreat was inevitable," says Woodrow Wilson in his excellent "Life of Washington." "It was blessed good fortune that it was still possible. When once it began it was headlong, reckless, frenzied. The men ran wildly, blindly, as if hunted by demons whom no man might hope to resist — haunted by frightful cries, maddened by the searching, secret fire of their foes, now coming hot upon their heels. Wounded comrades, military stores, baggage, their very arms, they left upon the ground, abandoned. Far into the night they ran madly on in frantic search for the camp of the rear division, crying, as they ran, for help; they even passed the camp, in their uncontrollable fear of pursuit, and went desperately on towards the settlements.

"Washington and the few officers and provincials who scoured the town found the utmost difficulty in bringing off their stricken general, where he lay wishing to die. Upon the fourth day after the battle he died, loathing the sight of a redcoat, they said, and murmuring praises of the 'blues,' the once despised Virginians. They buried his body in the road that the army wagons might pass over the place and obliterate every

trace of a grave their savage enemies might rejoice to find and desecrate."

When the army was reorganized and reinforced under wiser men than Braddock, it returned to the scene of its defeat and wiped out its disgrace by a great victory, and henceforth Fort Duquesne became Fort Pitt, so named after the famous English statesman who afterwards proved himself the stanch friend of America in its revolt against English extortion.

Soon afterward Washington was made commander in chief of all the forces of Virginia, and his promotion was not due to brilliant victories but to the sagacity shown by him in defeat.

"Your name is more talked of in Philadelphia than that of any other person in the army," wrote a brother officer to him, "and everybody seems willing to venture under your command."

The French and their allied Indians were active not only in the South and in the West, but also in the North. Terrible tales came of their atrocities.

"The supplicating tears of the women and the moving petitions of the men melt me into such deadly sorrow that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease."

Thus spoke Washington, but he was embarrassed in his attempts at relief by legislative squabbles and disorder among his men.

After the fall of Fort Duquesne, Washington retired to Mount Vernon to resume the practice of husbandry, but the war continued in other parts of the country, and only ended with the heroic young General Wolfe's great victory at Quebec, which forever swept the dominion of the French from this continent.

One can agree with Goldwin Smith that it would have been much better if England had said to the colonies at this time, "I have done for you all a parent could do. I have secured to you the dominion of the new world; you have outgrown my protection and control; follow henceforth your own destiny, cultivate your magnificent heritage, and be grateful to the arm which helped to win it for you."

For the colonies were growing dissatisfied and restless under England's rule, and gathering clouds were soon to descend in a tempest.

## CHAPTER IV

### Washington at Home

Washington had found a wife in a pretty and wealthy young widow, Martha Custis, and though she bore him no children, she brought him two by her previous husband. He was very domestic and loved the estate and the life upon it. He bought more and more land adjoining it until it comprised more than eight thousand acres, and he worked upon it early and late. He had horses, sheep, cattle and dogs, a shoemaker's shop, a blacksmith's shop, and looms, producing fabrics and other articles which he sold in part to his neighbors.

"I begin my diurnal course with the sun," he wrote. "If my hirelings are not in their places at that time, I send them messages expressive of my sorrow at their indisposition. Having put these wheels in motion, I examine the state of things further. By the time I have accomplished these matters, breakfast (a little after seven o'clock)

is ready. This being over, I mount my horse and ride round my farms, which employs me until it is time to dress for dinner."

A visitor thus describes him: "He often works with his men himself — strips off his coat, and works like a common man. The general has a great turn for mechanics. It is astonishing with what niceness he directs everything in the building way, condescending even to measure the things himself, that all may be perfectly uniform."

His diary records how he and his "smithy" produced a much better subsoil plow than could be bought, and how he, after many trials, put in successful operation an appliance for drilling corn and other grain.

To obviate loss from threshing wheat by spreading the sheaves in rows on the open ground and "treading out" the grain by horses — risking much by sudden changes of weather — he planned and built a great octagonal barn, with storage for crops above the main floor, and a "treading-room" in the basement, where on rainy days his animals and men could be usefully employed.

His mills were noted for the excellence of the flour, which he shipped not only to West Indian ports but to Europe. At the London custom-house his "Mount Vernon" brand was accepted

without inspection. The breeding of livestock was a lucrative feature of the estate. Choice animals and fowls from abroad were imported, and the progeny yielded handsome returns.

Trees profitable for fruit were bought, and his orchards as well as his vineyards became noted. The presence even to-day of several species of the mulberry at Mount Vernon indicates that the culture of silkworms had his attention. Another busy department was the spinning-house, where practically all the fabrics for clothing his three hundred slaves had to be made. There wool was spun and woven, home-grown flax was "broke, hackled and spun" into linen, and from the Carolinas raw cotton was obtained for working into cloth.

This branch of activity was Mrs. Washington's special care, and in it she took much pride. Besides clothing material, most of the linen and cotton fabric for household use was there manufactured. Some of the older servants, who were too decrepit for field duty, were trained in the several processes of carding, spinning, and weaving, and others were taught to make shoes. Because of remoteness from centers of supply and slowness of transportation facilities, the planters in those days had to be thus self-sustaining.

Another important feature of the estate was its fisheries. "This river" [the Potomac], he wrote, "is well supplied with various kinds of fish at all seasons of the year, and, in the spring, with the greatest profusion of shad, herrings, bass, carp, perch, sturgeon, etc. Several valuable fisheries appertain to the estate; the whole shore, in short, is one entire fishery."

And being very hospitable he had many guests, some of them living with him permanently.

As an example of the fine hospitality of Mount Vernon, we may repeat the incident of the guest there who had a bad cold, and who, after retiring for the night, heard a knock on his door. It was Washington, who, apologizing for the intrusion, brought with him a bowl of tea which he had made for the guest with his own hands.

He became very fond of his two step-children, John Parke and Martha Parke Custis, who at the date of his marriage were respectively six and four years old. His pet name for the girl was "Patsy," and he frequently bought presents for her. Among the orders sent to his London agents was one for "ten shillings worth of toys," another for "six little books for children beginning to read," another for "one fashionably dressed doll to cost a guinea," and another for "a very good spinet."

"Jack," the elder, was a little wayward, however, and as he grew up caused his family some disappointment. A tutor was procured for him, but he had no taste for study, and Washington complained that he preferred dogs, horses, and guns to learning.

"I want to fit you for more useful purposes than a horse racer," he protested.

But Jack did not improve, and a few years later married without consulting his mother or his stepfather who, when Jack died, had to adopt his children. Indeed, Washington was the soul of patience, and all his life had some member of his own or his wife's family on his hands.

A characteristic letter of his was written to his nephew, George Steptoe Washington, the son of his brother, Colonel Samuel Washington. It is so full of sound advice that I give all of it. Those who are seeking mere entertainment may skip it. Those who wish to improve themselves will find benefit in reading it: —

"MOUNT VERNON, 23rd March, 1789.

"DEAR GEORGE: As it is probable I shall soon be under the necessity of quitting this place and entering once more into the bustle of publick life, in conformity to the voice of my country and the earnest entreaties of my friends, however contrary it is to my own desires or inclinations, I think it incumbent on me as your uncle and friend to give

you some advising hints, which, if properly attended to, will, I conceive, be found very useful to you in regulating your conduct and giving you respectability not only at present but through every period of life.

"You have now arrived at that age when you must quit the trifling amusements of a boy, and assume the more dignified manners of a man. At this crisis your conduct will attract the notice of those who are about you, and as the first impressions are generally the most lasting, your doings now may mark the leading traits of your character through life. It is therefore absolutely necessary, if you mean to make any figure upon the stage of life, that you should take the first step right. What these steps are, and what general line is to be pursued to lay the foundation of a happy and honourable progress, is the part of age and experience to point out. This I shall do as far as in my power, with the utmost cheerfulness, and I trust that your own good sense will show you the necessity of following it.

"The first and great object with you at present is to acquire by industry and application such knowledge as your situation enables you to obtain and as will be useful to you in life. In doing this, two other important objects will be gained besides the acquirement of knowledge, namely, a habit of industry and disrelish of that profusion of money and dissipation of time which are ever attended upon idleness. I do not mean close application to your studies; that you should never enter into those amusements which are suited to your age and station. They may be made to go hand in hand with each other, and used in their proper seasons will be found to be a mutual assistance to each other. But what amusements are to be taken and what is

the great matter to be attended to? Your own judgment, with the advice of your real friends, who may have an opportunity of a personal intercourse with you, can point out the particular manner in which you may best spend your moments of relaxation much better than I can at a distance. One thing, however, I would strongly impress upon you, namely, when you have leisure to go into company that it always should be of the best kind that the place you are in will afford. By this means you will be constantly improving your manners and cultivating your mind while you are relaxing from your books, and good company will always be found much less expensive than bad.

"You cannot afford as an excuse for not using it that you cannot gain admission there, or that you have not a proper attention paid you in it. This is an apology made only by those whose manners are disgusting or whose character is exceptionable, neither of which I hope will ever be said of you. I cannot enjoin too strongly upon you a due observance of economy and frugality. As you well know yourself, the present state of your property and finances will not admit of any unnecessary expense.

"The article of clothing is now one of the chief expenses you will incur, and in this I fear you are not so economical as you should be. Decency and cleanliness will always be the first objects in the dress of a judicious and sensible man. A conformity to the prevailing fashion in a certain degree is necessary, but it does not follow from thence that a man should always get a new coat or other clothes upon trifling change in the mode, when perhaps he has two or three very good ones by him. A person who is anxious to be a leader of the fashion or one of the first to follow

it will certainly appear in the eyes of judicious men to have nothing better than a frequent change of dress to recommend him to notice. I would wish you to appear sufficiently decent to entitle you to admission into any company where you may be. I cannot too strongly enjoin it upon you, and your knowledge must convince you of the truth of it — that you should be as little expensive in this object as you properly can; you should always keep some clothes to wear to church or on particular occasions, which should not be worn every day. This case can be done without any additional expense, for whenever it is necessary to get new clothes those which have been kept for particular occasions will then come in as everyday clothes, unless they should be of a superior quality of the new. What I have said with respect to clothes will apply perhaps more pointedly to Lawrence than to you. And as you are much older than he is, and more capable of judging of the propriety of what I have observed, you must pay attention to him in this respect and see that he does not wear his clothes improperly or extravagantly.

"Much more might be said to you as a young man upon the necessity of paying a new attention to the moral virtues, but this may, perhaps, more properly be the subject of a future letter when you are about to enter into the world. If you comply with the advice herein given, to pay a diligent attention to your studies and employ your time of relaxation in proper company, you will find but few opportunities and little inclination while you continue at an academy to enter those scenes of vice and dissipation which too often present themselves to youth in every place, and particularly in towns. If you are determined to neglect your books and plunge into extravagance and dissipation, nothing

that I could now say would prevent it, for you must be employed, and if it is not in pursuit of those things which are profitable, it must be in pursuit of those which are destructive.

"Your affec. friend and uncle,

"Go. Washington.

"To Mr. George S. Washington."

In his habits and appearance George Washington was much like an English country gentleman, blue-eyed, kind, dignified, and hospitable. We can infer that, but for the dictates of duty and the demands on his patriotism, he would have chosen to remain a country gentleman, fully content with the simplicity of his life as a Virginia planter. We can see him going about his farm, keenly observant, strict but humane with his servants, tall and upstanding, fresh-faced, vigorous, and expecting from all under him a measure of his own diligence and precision. Of all the words we have used in describing him, none fits him better than that one word "stately."

## CHAPTER V

### The Beginning of the War

England now treats her colonies with such fairness that they are with her heart and soul, as in the last great war, but for more than ten years before the Revolutionary War began she imposed upon them and exasperated them. Her navigation laws compelled them to export their productions only to countries belonging to the British crown, and to import European goods solely from England and in British ships. All manufactures of the colonies that might interfere with those of the mother country were prohibited or subjected to restraints. Taxes were imposed. The colonists protested that there should be no taxation; that is to say, that so long as they were not represented in the English parliament they should not be taxed. The exactions increased. In 1765 a stamp act was passed by Parliament which required all documents to be written on stamped paper purchased from the government. Virginia was particularly enraged.

With Washington in the House of Burgesses sat Patrick Henry, a young lawyer of impassioned eloquence, who introduced resolutions declaring that not Parliament but the General Assembly of Virginia alone had the right and power to levy taxes.

"Caesar had his Brutus," Patrick Henry exclaimed, "King Charles his Cromwell, and George the Third — may profit by their example."

"Treason! Treason!" cried a few of the burgesses.

"Sir!" he went on, "if this be treason, make the most of it!"

The resolutions then passed were followed by a general outcry, and addresses praying for redress were sent to the king and to Parliament.

In Boston the people pulled down the house of a stamp distributor, and setting fire to it burned him in effigy. The ships in the harbor showed their colors at half mast. In New York the printed law was carried about the streets on a pole, surmounted by a death's head, with a scroll bearing the inscription, "The folly of England is the ruin of America."

The British government was alarmed and made some effort to pacify the colonists, without succeeding. The king was obstinate and his prime

minister, Lord North, was weak. Some young men in Boston attacked the British troops and were fired on. Only five of them were killed and six wounded after much provocation, but this fray became known as the "Boston Massacre" and added to the excitement.

Removing some of the taxes, the government still insisted on a tax on tea, and the people resolved to give up the use of that article entirely. More than that, some of them in Boston, disguised as Indians, boarded the ships in the harbor which were laden with tea, and emptied all there was of it into the sea. Their adventure has always been called the "Boston Tea-Party."

In reprisal Parliament passed the Boston Port Bill and other measures which punished that city by putting an embargo on all its commerce and ending all its privileges. The news of this soon reached Virginia, and threw the House of Burgesses into revolt. They passed resolutions of sympathy which the governor, Lord Dunmore, would not accept.

"Mr. Speaker, and gentlemen of the House of Burgesses," he said, "I have in my hand a paper, published by order of your house, conceived in such terms as reflect highly upon his Majesty and the Parliament of Great Britain, which makes

it necessary for me to dissolve you, and you are dissolved accordingly."

We can imagine the temper in which this was received, partly in derision and partly in defiance. The burgesses left the hall and went to a neighboring tavern where they repeated their protests and proposed the summoning of a general congress of the various colonies. Many in England sympathized with them, including the great Earl of Chatham.

Even yet they did not aim at separation. Benjamin Franklin declared that having traveled the whole country he had never heard from any person a wish for separation, or a hint that such a thing could be of advantage to America.

Washington said in October, 1774, "I am well satisfied that no such thing as independence is desired by any thinking man in all North America; on the contrary, that it is the ardent wish of the warmest advocates for liberty that peace and tranquillity on constitutional grounds will be restored, and the horrors of civil discord prevented."

There were as many as twenty-five thousand loyalists who for some time supported the king and Parliament, but their numbers gradually lessened.

The first Continental Congress met in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, and all the colonies were represented in it, except Georgia. Washington was present as a delegate from Virginia. The first public measure was a resolution against recent acts of Parliament violating the rights of the people of Massachusetts.

"To these grievous acts and measures," the resolutions declared, "Americans cannot submit; but in the hopes their fellow-subjects in Great Britain will, on a revision of them, restore us to that state in which both countries found happiness and prosperity, we have, for the present only, resolved to pursue peaceable measures."

The Congress remained in session fifty-one days, and the Earl of Chatham, speaking in the House of Lords of what it did, praised it in no uncertain terms. He said, "When your lordships look at the papers transmitted to us from America; when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow that in the master states of the world, I know not the people, or senate, who, in such a combination of difficult circumstances, can stand in preference to the delegates of America assembled in General Congress in Philadelphia."

When Patrick Henry, who also was a delegate, was asked whom he considered the greatest man in Congress, he replied, "If you speak of eloquence, Mr. Rutledge, of South Carolina, is by far the greatest orator, but if you speak of solid information and sound judgment, George Washington is undoubtedly the greatest man on the floor."

Little was done by Parliament to pacify the discontented people, and the outbreaks grew more and more formidable. Military preparations, hitherto confined to New England, spread to the Middle and Southern colonies, and Virginia was among the first to buckle on its armor. Washington at once became, from the confidence he inspired and the abilities he possessed, the military leader of the people.

At a meeting at Richmond, Patrick Henry said, "It is useless to address further petitions to the government, or to await the effects of those already addressed to the Throne. The time for supplication is past; the time for action is at hand. We must fight, Mr. Speaker! I repeat it, Sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left to us."

The cooler and more deliberate Washington also, at last, saw with the greatest reluctance that war was inevitable. He wrote to his brother,

"It is my full intention, if necessary, to devote my life and future to this cause."

The Massachusetts colonists had a store of guns and ammunition at Concord, which General Gage, the British commandant, decided to seize by stealth. He dispatched his troops from Boston for Concord at night, but the colonists surprised him more than he surprised them. They had learned of his expedition, and as the troops advanced they were preceded in the villages on the way by the clang of bells and the reports of alarm guns. By the time the British reached Lexington, they were confronted by about seventy of the patriots who were armed and ready for the fray. Shots were exchanged, but the forces were so unequal that the Americans were obliged to retreat.

Then the British continued on their way to Concord, and there met with an inglorious defeat. As they retreated to Boston, they were assailed by the murderous fire of sharpshooters behind every wall and fence, and thus sounded "the shot heard round the world," of which Emerson has sung. The Americans were indeed "embattled farmers," most of them without uniform, in the dress of every day, recruits from field and shop, old and young.

Probably never before in history had a few civil-

ians met and routed such a body of trained soldiers. The war had begun in earnest. But the odds were against the Americans, for they had used up their ammunition and were unpaid and without arms or proper clothing. The disposition to uphold the army was general, but much jealousy was shown as to who should be commander in chief.

A second Congress met in Philadelphia, and there John Adams brought the members to a decision. He said, "I had no hesitation to declare that I had but one gentleman in mind for that important command, and that was a gentleman from Virginia, who was among us, and very well known to all of us; a gentleman whose skill and experience as an officer, whose independent fortune, great talents, and excellent universal talents, would command the approbation of all America and unite the cordial exertions of all the colonies better than any other person in the Union. Mr. Washington, as soon as he heard me allude to him, from his usual modesty, darted into the library."

So Washington was elevated to that high position almost against his own judgment and wishes.

"However," he said, "as Congress desires it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service and for the

support of the glorious cause. As to pay, I beg leave to assure Congress that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to assume this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it."

To Mrs. Washington he wrote, "So far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it; not only from my unwillingness to part from you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being too great a trust for my capacity. I should enjoy more real happiness from a month with you at home than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose."

Then he was solicitous for those dependent upon him during his absence from home, and wrote to his steward, "Let the hospitality of the house with respect to the poor be kept up. Let no one go hungry away. If any of this kind of people should be in want of corn, supply their necessities, provided it does not encourage them to idleness, and I have no objection to your giving my money

in charity to the amount of forty or fifty pounds a year, when you think it well bestowed. What I mean by having no objection is, that it is my desire it should be done. You are to consider that neither myself or my wife is now in the way to do those good offices."

Washington commands respect from our first knowledge of him, but the more one reads of him the more respect warms into profound admiration and affection.

He preferred peace; he would have avoided war if he could. He said: "My first wish is to see this plague to mankind banished from the earth, and the sons and daughters of this world employed in more pleasing and innocent amusements than in preparing implements and exercising them for the destruction of mankind. Rather than quarrel about territory, let the poor, the needy, and oppressed of the earth, and those who want land, resort to the fertile plains of our western country, the *second land of promise*, and there dwell in peace, fulfilling the first and great commandment."

## CHAPTER VI

### Battles near Boston

On May 5, 1775, ships of war and transports arrived from England, bringing reinforcements under Generals Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton. The Americans were besieging Boston, in which their adversary was shut up.

"What!" cried Burgoyne. "Ten thousand peasants keep five thousand king's troops shut up! Well, let us get in, and we'll soon find elbow room."

The Americans were undisciplined and ill-prepared. The greater part of them had never seen service. But most of them were good marksmen, and that was to tell against the better equipment and numbers of the enemy. The battle of Bunker Hill was fought, and there the colonists proved that they could measure weapons with the British, though after much hard fighting, and with immense loss to the enemy, they were defeated.

Woodrow Wilson says: "There was no hurry, it seemed, about attacking the sixteen thousand raw provincials [Americans] whose long lines were drawn loosely about the town from Charlestown Neck to Jamaica Plain. But commanding hills looked across the water on either hand — in Charlestown on the north and in Dorchester on the southeast — and it would be well, General Howe saw, to secure them, lest they should be occupied by the insurgents. On the morning of the 17th of June, however, while leisurely preparations were a-making in Boston to occupy the hills of Charlestown, it was discovered that the provincials had been beforehand in the project.

"There they were in the clear sun, working diligently at redoubts of their own upon the heights. Three thousand men were put across the water to drive them off. Though they mustered only seventeen hundred behind their unfinished redoubts, three several assaults and the loss of a thousand men was the cost of dislodging them. They withheld their fire until they were within fifty — nay, thirty — yards of them, and then poured out a deadly, blazing fire which no man could face and live. They were ousted only when they failed of powder and despaired of reinforcements. Veteran officers who had led the assault

declared the regulars of France were not more formidable than these militia-men, whom they had despised as raw peasants."

Washington then arrived, and under the great elm on the common at Cambridge took his place as commander in chief.

The appearance of Boston changed under military preparations. Washington wrote, "Who would have thought, twelve months past, that all Cambridge and Charlestown would be covered over with American camps, and cut up into forts and intrenchments, and all the fields and orchards laid common, horses and cattle feeding in the choicest mowing land, whole fields of corn eaten down to the ground, and large parks of well-regulated locust trees cut down for firewood and other public purposes? This, I must say, looks a little melancholy. My quarters are at the foot of Prospect Hill, where great preparations are made for the reception of the enemy. It is very diverting to walk among the camps. They are as different in their forms as the owners are in their dress, and every tent is a portrait of the temper and tastes of the persons who encamp in it. Some are made of boards and some of sack cloth. Some partly of one and partly of the other. Again, others are made of stone and turf, brick

or branch. Some are thrown up in a hurry, others curiously wrought, the doors and windows done with withes and witches in the manner of a basket. Some are your proper tents and marquees, looking like the regular camp of the enemy."

One of his first orders stated that "exact discipline will be observed, and due subordination expected through the whole army, as a failure in these most essential points must necessarily produce extreme hazard, disorder, and confusion, and end in shameful disappointment and disgrace." He forbade swearing and drunkenness and "required and expected of all officers and soldiers not engaged in actual duty, a punctual attendance on divine service, to implore the blessing of Heaven upon the means used for our safety and defence."

Meanwhile the Americans carried the war into Canada, under such officers as Ethan Allen, Benedict Arnold, and Richard Montgomery, but though their expeditions were gallant, they did not succeed in conquering that country.

Washington, as ever, showed his magnanimity toward the French Canadians by writing to General Arnold thus: —

"I give it in charge to you to avoid all disrespect of the religion of the country and its ceremonies.

Prudence, policy, and a true Christian spirit will lead us to look with compassion upon their errors without insulting them. While we are contending for our own liberty, we should be very cautious not to violate the rights of conscience in others, ever considering that God alone is the Judge of the hearts of men, and to Him only in this case they are answerable."

He was solicitous for all prisoners, even for a son of Lord Chatham who was supposed to be traveling in Canada, and his attitude toward the enemy may be seen in another letter to Arnold: —

"If Lord Chatham's son should be in Canada, and in any way should fall into your power, you are enjoined to treat him with all possible deference and respect. You cannot err in paying too much honor to the son of so illustrious a character, and so true a friend to America. Any other prisoners who may fall into your hands you will treat with as much humanity and kindness as may be consistent with your own safety and the public interest. Be very particular in restraining not only your own troops, but the Indians, from all acts of cruelty and insult, which will disgrace the American arms and irritate our fellow-subjects against us."

Furthermore: — "You will be particularly careful to pay the full value for all provisions, or other

accommodations, which the Canadians may provide for you on your march. By no means press them or any of their cattle into your service, but amply compensate those who voluntarily assist you. For this purpose you are provided with a sum of money in specie, which you will use with as much frugality and economy as your necessities and good policy will admit, keeping as exact an account as possible of your disbursements.

"As the contempt of the religion of a country by ridiculing any of its ceremonies, or affronting its ministers or votaries, has ever been deeply resented, you are to be particularly careful to restrain every officer and soldier from such imprudence and folly, and to punish every instance of it. On the other hand, as far as lies in your power, you are to protect and support the free exercise of the religion of the country, and the undisturbed enjoyment of the rights of conscience in religious matters, with your utmost influence and authority."

The siege of Boston continued through the winter, and the great chief writing to a friend in Virginia thus described his position: —

"The enemy in Boston and on the heights at Charlestown (two peninsulas surrounded in a manner by ships of war and floating batteries)

are so strongly fortified as to render it almost impossible to face their lines, thrown up at the head of each neck.

"We can therefore do no more than keep them besieged, which they are, to all intents and purposes, as closely as any troops on earth can be who have an opening to the sea. Our advanced works and theirs are within musket-shot. We daily undergo a cannonade, which has done no injury to our works and very little hurt to our men. Those insults we are compelled to submit to for want of powder; being obliged, except now and then giving them a shot, to reserve what we have for closer work than cannon distance."

One morning early in March the British were astonished to find a great new fortification thrown up on Dorchester Heights.

"The rebels have done more in a single night than my whole army would have done in a month!" bitterly exclaimed General Howe, the British chief.

It was like a work of magic, and threatened the British positions as they had not been threatened before. So formidable was it that it overawed General Howe, who began to think of retiring without waiting for the reinforcements he expected. He had scouted the idea of being "in danger from the rebels"; he had "hoped they would attack

him." But now his confidence left him, and he had to choose between a night attack on Boston or the evacuation of that city. The night attack was prevented by a violent storm which played havoc with the transports, and on March 17, 1776, the British, in seventy-eight ships, departed, leaving the city and its neighborhood for good.

While Washington was in possession of General Howe's headquarters in Boston, he placed on his knee the little granddaughter of his landlady, and asked the child which she like the best, the redcoats who had gone, or the Americans who had displaced them. "The redcoats," the child replied, thinking of their more brilliant uniform. "Ah, my dear," said Washington, patting her, "they look better, but they don't fight as well. The ragged fellows are the boys for fighting." So indeed they were proving themselves to be, though one German officer wrote: "Our army is strong, finely clothed, and in excellent condition; full of courage and beautifully drilled; capable of looking into the white of the eye of Washington and all his tatterdemalions."

Washington had been criticized for his apparent inactivity, but later on he was hailed for the genius by which in the course of a few months he had improved his forces.

Unlike the British commander, he had not been over-confident and arrogant. There is a letter of his describing the anxious hours he suffered before the British retired:—

"The reflection on my situation, and that of this army, produces many an unhappy hour when all around me are wrapped in sleep. Few people know the predicaments we are in, on a thousand accounts; fewer still will believe, if any disaster happens to these lines, from what cause it flows. I have often thought how much happier I should have been, if, instead of accepting command under such circumstances, I had taken my musket on my shoulder and entered the ranks; or, if I could have justified the measure to posterity and my own conscience, had retired to the back country and lived in a wigwam. If I shall be able to rise superior to these, and many other difficulties which might be enumerated, I shall religiously believe that the finger of Providence is in it, to blind the eyes of our enemies; for surely if we get well through this month, it must be for want of their knowing the disadvantages we labor under."

## CHAPTER VII

### Defeats in New York

When General Howe was driven from Boston, he steered for Halifax to await the delayed reinforcements from England, and afterwards moved on New York, where Washington arrived before him with the greater part of his army. The first battle was that of Long Island, in which the Americans were defeated through their unpreparedness.

The British fleet nearly filled the harbor, and the British army included thirty thousand men, perfectly equipped. They had possession of Staten Island and made their way up the Hudson unopposed. General Howe put twenty thousand men ashore at Gravesend Bay, and there he intended to attack the Americans gathered on Brooklyn Heights, but before he could reach them Washington had made a masterly retreat, taking his ten thousand men, with all their stores and arms, across the East River.

Earl Howe, the General's brother, was in command of the fleet, and he now declared himself

empowered to compromise the dispute and pardon the offenders.

"No doubt we all need pardon from Heaven for our manifold sins and transgressions," said Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, "but the American who needs the pardon of his Britannic Majesty is yet to be found."

A conference took place on Staten Island and the old house where the meeting was held is still standing, a venerable reminder of Revolutionary days.

The American committee consisted of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge. All three had signed the Declaration of Independence. The Earl had been a warm friend and admirer of Franklin during the latter's stay in England, and high hopes had been based on the possible outcome of this meeting. The Americans, however, refused to entertain any proposal looking toward an amicable settlement unless Great Britain's representative first acknowledged the independence of the rebellious colonies. As the Earl was not empowered to make so sweeping a concession, the conference came to naught.

At its conclusion the Earl expressed his sorrow at the failure of the conference and the necessity he would be under to continue the conflict.

"I feel thankful to your lordship for your regard," said Benjamin Franklin, with his unfailing humor. "The Americans on their part will endeavor to lessen the pain you feel by taking the best possible care of themselves."

Soon after the Declaration of Independence was signed, a second mild attempt at conciliation was made. Howe, the British commander, and his brother, Admiral Howe, were ordered by their government to parley with the Americans, and one afternoon word came that a boat was coming from the British lines to the American camp. Another boat went out to meet it. A lieutenant was in command of the British boat, who had in his possession a letter addressed to "*Mr.* Washington." Colonel Reed, in charge of the American boat, said he knew no "*Mr.* Washington," only General Washington. The British were unwilling to recognize Washington by that title, and the parties separated without the delivery of the letter. It was only a point of etiquette but Washington was firm on it.

Five days later the British again approached, and this time referred to Washington as "Your Excellency," while they addressed him as "George Washington, Esquire," etc., etc.

Lord Howe thought this would do, but Wash-

ington would accept nothing less than his full and proper title, and Lord Howe at last had to inform his government that it would be necessary to back down, and that they did rather ignominiously.

Congress approved of Washington's attitude in the matter, and directed that no message or letter should be received on any occasion whatsoever from the enemy, by the commander in chief or by any other commander, except such as were properly addressed to them by their titles.

In the meantime General Israel Putnam, on Washington's orders, abandoned New York and joined him on the heights of Harlem, where the commander in chief was intrenched. He had thousands of men strengthening his position. Passing among them he found a youth of nineteen whose work showed extraordinary skill and zeal. This was Alexander Hamilton, whose warm friend till the end of his life Washington then became.

Hamilton is described as appearing at the head of a company of artillery, a "mere boy, with a small, delicate, and tender frame, who, with a cocked hat pulled down over his eyes, and apparently lost in thought, marched beside his cannon, patting it every now and then as if it were a favorite horse or pet plaything."

An attempt of the enemy to break through

the lines of Harlem Heights failed, with heavy loss, and this did something to revive the spirits of the American troops, but they were in a bad way, and Washington said, "Unless some speedy and effectual measures are adopted by Congress, our cause is lost." Under these gloomy apprehensions he borrowed "a few moments from the hours allotted for sleep," and sent Congress a letter setting forth the inefficiency of the existing military system, the disobedience, waste, confusion, and discontent produced by it among the men, and the vexations it caused the officers. He not only complained but pointed out the remedies. As a result the army was reorganized and established on a permanent footing. It was decreed that eighty-eight battalions should be raised by the different states, according to their abilities, and the conditions of service were very much improved in all respects. But there were still many discouragements for the Americans, and decisive victory was still far off. From New York they were obliged to retreat across the Hudson to New Jersey, and then across the Delaware to Pennsylvania.

"How long, sir, shall we continue to retreat?" an officer asked Washington, who replied, "If we can do no better, we will retreat over every river in

America, and last of all over the mountains, where we shall never lack opportunity to annoy, and finally, I hope, to expel the enemies of our country."

Various expedients were tried to keep the British back. Putnam had placed obstructions across the Hudson near Spuyten Duyvil. He sank ships loaded with stones across the river, and had a sort of primitive torpedo-boat, with which he hoped to blow up the British men-of-war. The good ships of stout oak broke through the vaunted barriers as through a cobweb, and a well-aimed shot sent the submarine engine to the bottom of the river.

An English officer wrote to a friend in London, "The Rebel army are in so wretched a condition as to clothing and accouterments, that I believe no native ever saw such a set of tatterdemalions. There are few coats among them but what are out at the elbows, and in a whole regiment there is scarcely a pair of breeches. Judge, then, how they must be pinched by a winter's campaign. We who are warmly clothed and well-equipped already feel it severely, for it is even now much colder than I ever felt it in England."

That Washington succeeded as well as he did was amazing in view of the inexperience of his

troops, who in the main were as undisciplined as they were ununiformed. It was indeed difficult to keep them in order. They wished to elect their own officers, and then to treat them as equals. In one instance the colonel of a regiment served as barber for his men. Boys in their teens fought side by side with men of sixty and over. There was one company of twenty-four men whose united ages reached a thousand years. They were all married men and left behind them at home a hundred and fifty-nine children and grandchildren. Nor did they always leave their offspring behind. Often a grandfather fought side by side with his son and his grandson. But in the beginning all of them were held in contempt by the aristocratic Germans and British, who neither sympathized with them nor understood such simple democrats as the Americans were. "What!" said a haughty Hessian, "this fellow is a butcher, and they call him major! This a grocer, and they call him colonel! This an old farmer, and they call him general. Why, there is not a gentleman among them!" The English employed German mercenaries.

Washington was so far playing a losing game, and what could be more pathetic than the sight of his ragged soldiery standing up in skirmish after skirmish and battle after battle in the neigh-

borhood of New York against superior numbers and superior equipment. He bore every reverse with the utmost fortitude, seldom, in his heart of hearts, and in the midst of disasters, losing faith in the ultimate success of his plans.

Fort Washington, below Spuyten Duyvil on the Hudson, regarded as impregnable, had fallen with heavy losses, and all during Washington's retreat through New Jersey he was much harassed, especially by the hired Hessians, who included in their ranks many desperate characters, such as thieves and murderers. It was midwinter and the American soldiers were in rags. Many of the people of New Jersey were themselves either half-hearted in the cause of liberty or openly disloyal to the patriots and were only aroused by the ill-treatment they received from the foe.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Crossing the Delaware

There is an interesting description of Washington as he appeared to his contemporaries, by one who commanded a company in the Revolutionary War, and who saw him before the crossing of the Delaware.

"Washington," he says, "had a large thick nose, and that day I saw him, gave me the impression that he was not so moderate in the use of liquors as he was supposed to be. I found afterwards that this was a peculiarity. His nose was apt to turn scarlet in a cold wind. He was standing near a small camp fire, evidently lost in thought, and making no effort to keep warm. He seemed six feet and a half in height, was as erect as an Indian, and did not relax for a moment from a military attitude. Washington's exact height was six feet two in his boots.

"He was then a little lame from striking his knee against a tree. His eye was so gray that it

looked almost white, and he had a troubled look on his colorless face. He had a piece of woolen cloth around his throat and was quite hoarse. Perhaps the throat trouble from which he finally died had its origin about then.

"Washington's boots were enormous. They were number 13. His ordinary walking shoes were number 11. His hands were large in proportion and he could not buy a ready-made glove to fit him, and so had to have his gloves made to order to fit him.

"His mouth was his strong feature, his lips always being tightly compressed. That day they were compressed so tightly, as to be painful to look at.

"At that time he weighed two hundred pounds, and there was no surplus flesh about him. He was tremendously muscled, and the fame of his great strength was everywhere. His large tent when wrapped up with poles was so heavy that it required two men to place it in the camp wagon. Washington would lift it up with one hand and throw it into the camp wagon as easily as if it were a pair of saddle-bags. He could hold a musket with one hand and shoot with precision as easily as other men did with a horse pistol.

"His lungs were his weak point and his voice

was never strong. He was at that time in the prime of life. His hair was a chestnut-brown, his cheeks were prominent, and his head was not large compared in contrast to every other part of his body, which seemed large and bony at all points. His finger joints and wrists were so large as to be genuine curiosities.

"As to his habits at that period, I found out much that might be interesting. He was an enormous eater, but was content with bread and meat, if he had plenty of it. But hunger seemed to put him in a rage."

This is not a flattering picture, and there are some mistakes in it, yet some of the details are beyond a doubt quite true. One thing it does not record — the phenomenal power he had of awing an audience. He could move vast bodies of men by his presence alone. People became and remained grave before him until they awoke, as from a trance, and burst into resounding applause.

Retreating through New Jersey, Washington crossed to the western shore of the Delaware River near Trenton, and on the night of December 25, 1776, he made his historic crossing back to the eastern shore, to attack Colonel Rall and his force of more than a thousand men.

The night was bitterly cold, with high winds,

sleet, and snow. Two of the patriot army were frozen to death, and many of the muskets were put out of action through becoming wet. Washington was never nearer despair than at this time.

"No man, I believe," he wrote to his brother, "ever had a greater choice of difficulties, and less means to extricate himself from them. However, under a full persuasion of the victory of our cause, I cannot entertain an idea that it will finally sink, though it may remain for some time under a cloud."

An engagement took place. The British, or rather the Hessians, who were mercenary soldiers fighting for them, were taken by surprise, and after a brief engagement more than a thousand of them were captured.

The battle of Trenton was one of the most dramatic and picturesque of the whole war. It was fought at Christmas in the scurry of a frightful storm, with the thermometer close to zero. An excellent but simple account of it is given in a letter to his wife by Colonel Knox: "About half a mile from the town," he wrote, "was an advance guard on each road, consisting of a captain's guard. These we forced, and entered the town with them pell-mell; and here succeeded a scene of war which I had often conceived, but never saw before. The hurry, fright, and confusion of the enemy was not

unlike that which will be when the last trump shall sound. They endeavored to form in the streets, the heads of which we had previously the possession of with cannon and howitzers. These, in the twinkling of an eye, cleared the streets. The backs of the houses were resorted to for shelter. These proved ineffectual. The musketry soon dislodged them. Finally they were driven through the town into the open plains beyond."

Washington had made the watchword of the day "Victory or death." He observed that while in other actions he had seen misbehavior in some individuals, at Trenton he had seen none. Not a soul was found skulking, but all were fierce for battle.

They captured six fieldpieces, a thousand fine muskets, and fifteen standards. And, strange to relate, while hundreds of the enemy had fallen, not a single American was killed.

Thus they replied to the contempt of the Hessians, for among the American commanders were Knox, a Boston bookseller, Nathanael Greene, the son of a Quaker blacksmith who followed his father's trade, and Sterling, a shopkeeper. Another who distinguished himself by his bravery was a young lieutenant, James Monroe, who afterwards became fifth President of the United

States, and author of the famous Monroe Doctrine.

Almost immediately after Trenton came the battle of Princeton, where again the Americans were victorious and left the foe with greater respect for their powers.

A few days later the British advanced again.

"Now is the time to make sure of Washington," said a British officer to Lord Cornwallis.

"Oh, well, the old fox can't escape this time. To-morrow morning we'll fall upon him and take him and his ragamuffins all at once."

But in the morning the "old fox" could not be found. He took three hundred more prisoners, and before going into winter quarters at Morristown, he gained possession of most of the enemy's posts in New Jersey. Hearing of his success his mother said, "Here is too much flattery. Still, George will not forget the lessons I taught him. He will not forget himself, though he is the subject of so much praise."

## CHAPTER IX

### Dark Days in Pennsylvania

By the summer of 1777, the British were again active in Canada and Northern New York. There was much sympathy with them among many of the people who still preferred King George to independence, and General Howe issued a proclamation promising security to all Tories who took no further part in the war.

"For two years have we maintained the war," Washington declared, "and struggled with difficulties innumerable, but the prospect has brightened. Now is the time to reap the fruit of all our toils and dangers. If we behave like men, this third campaign will be our last."

But with eleven thousand men he had to fight eighteen thousand British. Such odds were frequent throughout the war.

A battle was fought, September 11, 1777, on the banks of a creek called the Brandywine, within twenty-six miles of Philadelphia, and the Americans were defeated, though not crushed. Indeed, with

such a difference in numbers and discipline, such an outcome was well-nigh inevitable. Washington's army withdrew in good order, however, ready for further fighting. In fact, the Americans so harassed the approach of Cornwallis's army to Philadelphia that two weeks passed before the victors could enter that city.

When the news of the conflict at the Brandywine reached Philadelphia, many of the Americans fled to the mountains, and Congress, which was then in session there, moved first to Lancaster and then to York.

The British advanced on the city, with Lord Cornwallis at their head, making a picturesque scene which Irving has described for us: —

"Lord Cornwallis marched into Philadelphia on the 26th with a brilliant escort, followed by splendid legions of British and Hessian grenadiers, long trains of artillery and squadrons of light dragoons, stepping to the swelling music of 'God save the King,' and presenting with their scarlet uniforms, their glittering arms and flaunting feathers, striking contrast to the weary and wayworn troops [the Americans] who had recently poured through the same streets, happy if they could cover their raggedness with brown linen hunting-frocks, or decorate their caps with sprigs of evergreen."

A boy who saw the British enter Philadelphia describes them: "I went up to the front rank of the grenadiers when they had entered Second Street. Several of them addressed me thus: 'How do you do, young one?' 'How are you, my boy?' — in a brotherly tone that still seems to vibrate in my ear. The Hessians followed in the rear of the grenadiers. Their looks to me were terrific, — their brass caps, their mustachios, their countenances by nature morose, and their music that sounded in better English than they themselves could speak, 'Plunder! Plunder! Plunder!'"

The British were clean, healthy, and well-clad, very different from Washington's barefooted and ragged troops, who had earlier filled the spectators with despair.

Thus the British took possession of the capital of the rebellious colonies, so long the object of their awkward attempts. Washington maintained his characteristic equanimity.

All through this period Washington's patience and magnanimity never failed him. His letters to Congress and to individuals were full of the forbearance of nobility. He was never unfair, never unjust, never vindictive. He pleads for his soldiers, and for as much kindness to the enemy as possible; he reprobates dishonesty among officers

and the burning of houses where the good of the service is not promoted by it.

"The burning of houses," he writes, "where the apparent good of the service is not promoted by it, and the pillaging of them at all times and upon all occasions, are to be discountenanced and punished with the utmost severity. In short, it is to be hoped that men who have property of their own, and a regard for the rights of others, will shudder at the thought of rendering any man's situation, to whose protection he has come, more insufferable than his open and avowed enemy would make it; when by duty and every rule of humanity they ought to aid and not oppress the distressed in their habitations. . . . Men, therefore, who are not employed as mere hirelings, but have stepped forth in defense of everything that is dear and valuable, not only to themselves but to posterity, should take pains to conduct themselves with the greatest propriety and good order, as their honor and reputation call loudly upon them to do it."

Observe, too, his courtesy to a captive officer: —

"Far from suffering the views of national opposition to be embittered and debased by personal animosity, I am ever ready to do justice to the merit of the man and soldier, and to esteem where esteem is due, however the idea of a public enemy

may interpose. You will not think it the language of unmeaning ceremony if I add that sentiments of personal respect, in the present instance, are reciprocal.

"Viewing you in the light of an officer contending against what I conceive to be the rights of my country, the reverses of fortune you experienced in the field cannot be unacceptable to me; but, abstracted from considerations of national advantage, I can sincerely sympathize with your feelings as a soldier, the unavoidable difficulties of whose situation forbade his success; and as a man whose lot combines the calamity of ill-health, the anxieties of captivity, and the painful sensibility for a reputation exposed, where he most values it, to the assaults of malice and detraction."

The next battle was fought on October 4, 1777, at Germantown, a suburb of Philadelphia. It was bitterly fought with varying fortune on both sides, but eventually the Americans had to retire. This was partly due to a dense fog that came up, and in the uncertain light the Americans fired into their own ranks. Nevertheless, the valor shown added much to Washington's renown, and Frederick the Great predicted that with such a people under such a leader success was sure to come. Congress, however, chose General Sullivan

as a scapegoat, and court-martialed him. At once Washington came forward as his defender and saved him from undeserved punishment. General Sullivan was a man of good education, an upright statesman, and a faithful and intelligent soldier, though in none of these spheres was he a really commanding figure.

Less than a month after the battle of the Brandywine, the Americans were cheered and encouraged by the news of Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga.

In this conflict General Gates won his greatest laurels, though the victory was far from being wholly his own. For Philip Schuyler prepared this victory, Daniel Morgan and Benedict Arnold did the fighting, while Gates reaped the reward. General Horatio Gates was an Englishman, a godson of the famous Horace Walpole, and served in the British army, coming to America in time to share in the defeat of Braddock.

Gates was twice in command of the Northern division of the American army, and had hosts of friends who claimed that he should be commander in chief. But he was false, hypocritical, and constantly intriguing against Washington, though protesting his regard for him. In August, 1780, Lord Cornwallis put him to rout at Camden, South Carolina, and that disaster led to his dis-

grace, while Washington, steadfast and modest, pursued his way unscathed.

How magnanimous Washington was toward him is shown by the following letter which he wrote to the President of Congress: —

"I discovered very early in the war symptoms of coldness and constraint in General Gates's behavior to me. These increased as he rose into greater consequence; but we did not come to a direct breach till the beginning of last year. This was occasioned by a correspondence, which I thought made rather free with me, between Generals Gates and Conway, which accidentally came to my knowledge.

". . . After this affair subsided, I made a point of treating General Gates with all the attention and cordiality in my power, as well from a sincere desire of harmony as from an unwillingness to give any cause of triumph to our enemies, from an appearance of dissension among ourselves. I can appeal to the whole army and to the world, whether I have not cautiously avoided every word or hint that could tend to disparage General Gates in any way. I am sorry his conduct to me has not been equally generous, and that he is continually giving me fresh proofs of malevolence and opposition. It will not be doing him injustice to say

that, besides the little, underhand intrigues which he is frequently practising, there has hardly been any great military question in which his advice has been asked that it has not been given in an equivocal and designing manner, apparently calculated to afford him an opportunity of censuring me on the failure of whatever measure might be adopted.

"When I find that this gentleman does not scruple to take the most unfair advantages of me, I am under a necessity of explaining his conduct to justify my own. This, and the perfect confidence I have in you, have occasioned me to trouble you with so free a communication of the state of things between us. I shall still be as passive as a regard to my own character will permit."

Besides General Gates and General Lee, Washington had a bitter enemy in General Thomas Conway, an Irishman who had served many years in the French army. Though the three plotted long and secretly, their conspiracy was foiled by Washington's evident honesty and sincerity; and the "Conway Cabal," as it was known, dissolved in deep disgrace.

Meanwhile the British held Philadelphia, and devoted themselves to pleasure — balls, theatrical performances, concerts and luxuries of all kinds. For the next six months the war stood still, and

there was much complaint in England against the slothfulness of her soldiers. "We are often told that Mr. Washington's army is inferior in numbers to the British," a London newspaper said, "— sickly, ill-clothed, dying, dispirited, and by no means as well armed as our own troops. Why have not the valiant, highly-disciplined and well-appointed royal veterans swept such a rabble off the face of the universe?"

That winter at Valley Forge was full of pains, sorrows, and discouragements for the intrenched Americans. They were beset by hunger and nakedness. On the 20th of December a large number of them were without meat and had been three whole days without bread. Evening after evening the cry of "No meat! No meat!" could be heard along the line of the rude huts which had been built for their shelter.

General Anthony Wayne reported that after spending his private money on supplies, one third of his men had "no shirt under Heaven," and that their outer garments hung from them in ribbons. And as their shoeless feet bled and left crimson trails in the snow, Washington's heart bled for them, as his appeal for succor for them met with no response from Congress.

The hospitals were full and like dungeons. Four or five patients were known to die on the same bed of straw before it was changed. Dysentery and smallpox prevailed. An old man with whom Washington lodged one day found the general in a thicket by the roadside, on his knees in prayer, with tears running down his cheeks. On returning home he told his wife that the nation would surely survive its trouble, because, if there was any one on earth the Lord would listen to, it was George Washington.

And the poor soldier ate his bad food with seeming control, and labored barefoot through the mud and cold, with his shirt hanging about him in strings, and a song in his mouth extolling his chief.

On February 16, 1778, Washington wrote to Governor George Clinton: "For some days past there has been little less than a famine in the camp. A part of the army has been a week without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been ere this excited by their suffering to a general mutiny and dispersion. Strong symptoms, however, of discontent have appeared in particular instances, and

nothing but the most active efforts everywhere can long avert so shocking a catastrophy."

There may be seen at Valley Forge to-day a beautiful Arch of Triumph for which Congress, in 1910, appropriated $100,000. On one side is inscribed,

"To the Officers and Private Soldiers of the Continental Army, Dec. 19, 1777–June 19, 1778."

On the other side are these words, taken from Washington's letter just quoted,

"Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery."

The conditions rapidly improved in the spring, and before summer the men were well nourished and properly clothed.

At this critical juncture, France came to the support of the Americans. A treaty was made between the two countries that, should war ensue between France and England, it should be made a common cause by the contracting parties, and that neither should make truce with the enemy except by joint consent, nor until the independence of the United States was established.

## CHAPTER X

### "An Ocean of Difficulties"

On June 28, 1778, was fought what is known as the battle of Monmouth, at Freehold, New Jersey. In spite of disobedience and treachery on the part of one of his generals, this was to prove a victory for Washington. The command of the advance force was offered to General Charles Lee, who at first refused it but presently changed his mind. He brought his troops face to face with the British, and then, without orders, beat a shameful retreat. Thus Washington found him.

"What is the meaning of all this, sir?" he demanded.

Lee hesitated.

"I desire to know the meaning of this disorder and confusion," Washington insisted.

Lee made an angry reply. His troops, he said, had been thrown into confusion by contradictory intelligence and by disobedience of orders, and he had not felt disposed to beard the whole British army under such conditions.

"It is not the whole British army, merely a strong covering party."

"A stronger party than mine," Lee replied. "I did not think it proper to run the risk."

"You ought not to have taken command unless you meant to fight the enemy," Washington sternly rejoined, and then prepared to retrieve as best he could the fortunes of the day.

Despite Lee's disobedience and the confusion it involved, the Americans proved the victors, for the British were compelled to withdraw. The day was intensely hot and many on both sides succumbed to the heat.

The disobedient general, Charles Lee, was a remarkable character. He was the son of a British military officer, and is said to have held a commission when he was eleven years old. He was with Washington at the defeat of Braddock, and later served in the armies of Poland and Portugal. He was restless, impetuous, and boastful, and the Mohawks who adopted him as a natural son gave him the name of "Boiling Water," which described him very well.

When the Revolution broke out he abandoned England, and took sides with the colonists, having an eye to the better prospects that service in their cause offered. He insisted that Congress should

pay him thirty thousand dollars as an indemnity against the probable confiscation of his estates in England, and throughout his whole career he was vain and selfish, though not by any means cowardly.

When in June, 1776, the British were about to attack Fort Sullivan in the harbor of Charleston, Lee, who had been sent to take command of troops there, went to the fort, and after a brief inspection declared that it would be impossible to hold it and that it was a "slaughter pen." He wanted to withdraw the garrison without striking a blow; but while he was preparing to retreat, the governor of the state gave command to Colonel Moultrie, who won the day and thus saved the fort, the city, and the state from the hands of the enemy.

Lee's professions of attachment to the cause of independence were insincere. He was at heart a traitor, yet he succeeded in beguiling many people by his dash and his persuasive talk. He was a good letter-writer and claimed, probably without truth, to be the author of those famous "Letters of Junius," the source of which continues to be one of the mysteries of literature. Some of the ablest letters he wrote were against Washington, whose high place he always coveted. All his

plotting was ended by that court-martial which he himself sought after the battle of Monmouth and which led to his retirement.

Even while he was disobedient, quarrelsome, and inefficient, the Americans did not lose faith in him nor suspect that in his movements during the flight of the army under Washington from the Hudson to the Delaware, and in his movements at the battle of Monmouth, he was seeking to betray them. But such was the case. Eighty years after his death, letters were found which proved his treachery.

A fleet had arrived from France, much battered after a tempestuous voyage, and Washington was ordered to support it in offensive measures by sea and land. He was to retake Rhode Island, then in possession of the British, but the movement failed through a complication of troubles. There were also troubles from the Indians, and soon the country was horrified by the massacre in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania.

Washington was ceaseless in his activities. There was no relaxation of his anxieties and endeavors. He knew that there was no prospect of the immediate ending of the war, though many persons thought that England, menaced by enemies at home, would reduce her forces here. America,

Washington declared, had never stood in more imminent need of the wise, patriotic, and spirited exertions of her sons than at this period. He recommended a defensive policy instead of an offensive one, and in the long run his advice, as usual, proved its wisdom.

The new-born nation, if it could be called a nation, was poverty-stricken and nearly exhausted through lack of money. It had little but paper money, which was worth but a fraction of its face value. Some of the food for the army had to be taken from the people whether they were willing to sell or not, and Washington charged his officers to act with as much consideration as possible, graduating the exaction according to the stock of each individual. Winter was again upon him, moreover, and it was the coldest winter ever known. The great bay of New York was frozen over. Homes were torn down to make firewood. Food was almost unprocurable. Again his troops were half fed and half clothed. One silver dollar was worth seventy-five dollars in bills.

A mean contractor tried to take advantage of the soldiers by postponing the delivery of meat he had agreed to provide, giving them instead certificates that so many pounds were due them, and hoping that the future would enable him to make

good the deficiency at lower prices. Washington heard of this, and ordered his arrest.

"How shall the prisoner be fed, sir?" a quartermaster inquired.

"Give yourself no trouble," Washington replied. "He shall be fed from my table."

Shortly afterwards a waiter in the livery of the general was seen bearing upon a salver most of the requisites of a meal — knives, forks, spoons, and plate. The prisoner was flattered by the apparent attention, but when he removed the cover he found, instead of food, a certificate that he was entitled to a meal!

Washington then summoned him to his presence, and said to him, "Now, sir, you see how little the cravings of hunger can be satisfied by a mere certificate. I trust that you will profit by this lesson."

The conflict at Monmouth Court House was Washington's last battle before the final victory at Yorktown, and the main activities of the two armies in the last years of the war were in the South. Conflicts were to take place at Savannah, Charleston, Camden, King's Mountain, the Cowpens, and Eutaw Springs in South Carolina, and Guilford Court-house in North Carolina, before Washington made his brilliant march to Yorktown

and gained the victory which virtually ended the war.

At one time several British vessels lay off Mount Vernon, and fearing an attack, Washington's overseer endeavored to prevent this by taking food to them. Washington disapproved of this and wrote to the overseer as follows: —

"I am very sorry to hear of your loss; I am a little sorry to hear of my own; but that which gives me most concern is that you should go on board an enemy's vessel and furnish them with refreshments. It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard that, in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my house and laid the plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them with a view to prevent a conflagration. It was not in your power, I acknowledge, to prevent them from sending a flag on shore, and you did right to meet it; but you should, in the same instant that the business of it was unfolded, have declared explicitly that it was improper for you to yield to their request; after which, if they had proceeded to help themselves by force, you

could but have submitted; and being unprovided for defense, this was to be preferred to a feeble opposition, which only served as a pretext to burn and destroy."

With all his gravity through these anxious and distressing times, Washington has some playful moods. Let us then quote from another letter of his inviting a friend, Dr. Cochran, to dinner in camp.

"I have asked Mrs. Cochran and Mrs. Livingston to dine with me to-morrow, but am I not in honor bound to apprize them of their fare? As I hate deception, even where the imagination only is concerned, I will. It is needless to premise that my table is large enough to hold the ladies. Of this they had ocular proof yesterday. To say how it is usually covered is rather more essential, and this shall be the purport of my letter.

"Since our arrival at this happy spot, we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table; a piece of roast beef adorns the foot, and a dish of beans or greens, almost imperceptible, decorates the center. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which I presume will be the case to-morrow, we have two beefsteak pies, or dishes of crab, dividing the space and reducing the distance between dish and

dish, to about six feet, which without them would be nearly twelve feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover that apples will make pies, and it is a question if, in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of the apples instead of having both the beefsteaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates once tin but now iron (not become so by the labor of scouring) I shall be happy to see them."

Jocularly as he writes of it, such a meal was a feast to him and far beyond what he usually received. He wanted nothing more than his soldiers got. He sympathized with the meanest of them. His heart toward them was a fountain of justice and kindness.

## CHAPTER XI

### The End of the War

The British army was now divided into two parts, one in New York and the other, under Lord Cornwallis, in the South. Washington decided to unite his own armies, and completely to crush Cornwallis. It was necessary for this that Sir Henry Clinton, the general in charge of the British forces in New York, should be kept in ignorance of Washington's intentions and be led to suppose that he was in danger of attack. Fictitious letters were allowed to reach him describing movements which Washington was supposed to contemplate, and while his antagonist was thus deceived, Washington, leaving but a few of his men at White Plains, hurried into Virginia, where at Mount Vernon he was joined by Count Rochambeau. Lord Cornwallis was then at Yorktown, and it was Washington's aim to capture him before he could be reinforced by Clinton.

This was to be the decisive battle of the war,

and Washington himself put the match to the first gun that was fired.

Cornwallis was surprised by the appearance of the fleet of the French Count de Grasse within the capes of the Delaware, and his retreat was cut off in every direction, though he had fortified the town. That night Washington slept on the ground without covering, and with the root of a mulberry tree for a pillow. The next day the two armies confronted each other.

Cornwallis received dispatches from Sir Henry Clinton, informing him that a fleet of twenty-three ships, with about five thousand troops, would sail to his assistance at once. Then he abandoned his outworks and withdrew his forces within the town. This move proved a mistake, for the next morning the outworks were taken by the Americans. Before the fleet arrived, however, the battle had begun. The cannonade was kept up almost incessantly for three or four days. The enemy suffered severely; guns were dismounted or silenced and many were killed. Four of their ships were set on fire. But in turn the British harassed the Americans and opened a galling fire upon them.

Washington watched the progress of the battle from an exposed position, and one of his aides called his attention to his peril.

"If you think the position is dangerous," he said quietly and without moving, "you are at liberty to step back."

Soon afterwards a musket-ball fell at his feet. General Knox grasped his arm, exclaiming, "My dear general, we can't afford to spare you yet!"

"It is a spent ball and no harm is done," Washington replied calmly.

Washington indeed was always calm, and never took thought of the value of his own life. Where others grew excited, he was unmoved. Fear never entered his great soul. In the presence of danger he was a man of iron.

The position of the enemy became impossible, and Cornwallis attempted an escape. His plan was to cross the river in the night and, turning northward, to rejoin Sir Henry Clinton in New York by forced marches. But a violent storm interfered with his project, and he sent a letter to Washington proposing an armistice, which ended in his surrender.

The prisoners numbered more than seven thousand. The cry of victory spread from the camp to the nation, and the news, "Cornwallis is taken!" echoed and reëchoed throughout the land. When the British prime minister, Lord North, heard it, he received it as if it were "a ball in his heart."

But while it produced consternation in England, our whole country gave itself up to transports of joy.

There was still much discontent in the American army, however. Neither men nor officers had received their pay, and many of them were still badly provided for. A lady has described the difference she saw between the Americans and the British, as the former entered New York and the latter were leaving.

"We had been accustomed for a long time to military display in all the finish and finery of garrison life; the troops just leaving were equipped as if for show, and with their scarlet uniforms and burnished arms made a brilliant display; the troops that marched in, on the contrary, were ill-clad, and weather-beaten, and made a forlorn appearance; but then they were our troops, and as I looked at them, and thought of all they had done and suffered for us, my heart and my eyes were full, and I admired and gloried in them the more, because they were weather-beaten and forlorn."

So great was the discontent and dissatisfaction with the government at this time that one officer, a friend of Washington, who may have been the mouthpiece of others, boldly suggested to him that the government should be changed to a

monarchy, and that he should be king; but George Washington had no ambition to make himself paramount at the cost of others — no ambition but to see his country free and prosperous.

"With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I have read the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal!" he said. "Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army as you have expressed, and I must view them with abhorrence and reprehend them with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary. I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address, which, to me, seems big with the greatest mischief which can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see justice done to the army than I do; and as far as my powers and influence in a constitutional way extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to

effect it, should there be occasion. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself, or for posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or anyone else, a sentiment of a like nature."

More sedition appeared at Newburgh on the Hudson, where a notice was issued calling a meeting of the officers to consider what could be done for the relief of the army. It threatened to compel Congress to attend to their demands, and might have led to another revolution. But Washington addressed them and won them over to peaceful measures. Not being a ready speaker, he read from notes what he had to say, and at the end of the first sentence said, as he put on his spectacles, "Gentlemen, you will pardon me for putting on my glasses. I have grown gray in your service and now feel myself growing blind."

The pathos of that at once touched them, and they gave an attentive ear to all that followed.

"If my conduct heretofore has not indicated to you that I have been a faithful friend to the army, my declaration of it at this time would be equally unavailing and improper. But as I was one of the first who embarked in the cause of our common country; as I have never left your side one moment,

save when called from you on public duty; as I have been the constant companion and witness of your distress, and not among the last to feel and to acknowledge your merit; as I have considered my own military reputation as inseparably connected with that of the army; as my heart has ever expanded with joy when I have heard its praises, and my indignation has risen when the mouth of detraction has been opened against it, it can scarcely be supposed, at this stage of the war, that I am indifferent to its interests."

What wonderful words these are, coming from a man who had so few educational opportunities in his youth! They are so correct and yet so full of feeling, so sincere and so well-balanced that they would do credit to a scholar. Indeed, hundreds of scholars never learn to write so well. It is evident that he profited by reading the masters of English prose, whose works, including "The Spectator," Lord Fairfax lent him in his youth. Lord Fairfax was a man of fine literary taste, and had himself been, it is said, a contributor to "The Spectator," and had numbered among his friends the great authors, Addison and Steele.

The army was reconciled and remained loyal to the government. But Washington saw that some changes were necessary. He saw that thirteen

independent states, under thirteen independent governments, would not work smoothly together, and he proposed an indissoluble union of the states under one head, the payment of all debts contracted by the country during the war, and the establishment of a uniform militia system. As we know, his advice was taken.

At last the patriot army was disbanded, and before his departure for Philadelphia, Washington took touching leave of his officers at Fraunces Tavern, which still stands in Broad Street, New York. As he said "good-by" to them he could scarcely control his voice. "I cannot come to each of you to take my leave," he said, "but shall be obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand. With a heart full of love and gratitude I now take leave of you, most devoutly wishing that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

Tears were in his eyes. "The deep feeling and manly tenderness of those veterans in the parting moment could find no utterance in words," says Washington Irving. "Silent and solemn they followed their loved commander as he left the room, passed through a corps of light infantry, and proceeded on foot to Whitehall Ferry. Hav-

ing entered the barge, he turned to them, took off his hat, and waved a silent adieu. They replied in the same manner, and having watched the barge until the intervening point of the Battery shut it from sight, returned, still solemn and silent, to the place where they had assembled."

The war had lasted eight years to a day.

While the capital was then at Annapolis, the Treasury Department was in Philadelphia, and there Washington presented his accounts. These were all in his own handwriting, and all exact. He had refused pay for himself, and had not charged for some of the money he had spent.

His progress in the direction of Annapolis was a succession of welcomes. Everywhere he was hailed with enthusiasm and greeted with addresses by legislative assemblies and learned and religious societies. "He accepted them all with that modesty inherent in his nature, little thinking that his present popularity was but the early outbreaking of a fame that was to go on widening and deepening from generation to generation, and extending over the whole civilized world."

Arrived at Annapolis, he sent a letter to the President of Congress asking whether it would be most proper for him to present his resignation in writing or orally, and the latter mode was chosen.

The hall was crowded with public functionaries, the military, and ladies, all in a state of subdued awe and excitement.

"The great events on which my resignation depended having at length taken place, I now have the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress," said Washington, "and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country.

"I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them, to His holy keeping. Having now finished the work assigned to me, I retire from the great theater of action, and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life."

One who was present says, "Few tragedies ever drew so many tears from so many beautiful eyes, as the moving manner in which his Excellency took his final leave of Congress."

In accepting the commission, the President of

Congress declared to Washington, "You retire from the theater of action with the blessings of your fellow-citizens, but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command; it will continue to animate remotest ages."

The next morning, wnich was Christmas Day, Washington went home to Mount Vernon.

"The scene is at last closed," he said. "I feel myself eased of a load of public cares. I hope to spend the remainder of my days in cultivating the affections of good men, and in the practice of the domestic virtues."

## CHAPTER XII

### Arnold and André

Benedict Arnold was one of the most courageous and brilliant generals of the army. He served in the Ticonderoga expedition, and marched through the wilderness to Canada, overcoming great difficulties and earning Washington's heartiest approval. In his attack on Quebec he led his troops up the crags once scaled by General Wolfe, and planted his flag on the famed Heights of Abraham. He was in favor of an immediate dash on the city, but his associates discouraged him, and while they delayed, the small garrison within the walls was aroused.

The cry arose, "The enemy is on the Heights of Abraham! The gate of St. John is open!"

Arnold took his men within a hundred yards of the wall, and sent a flag demanding, in the name of the United Colonies, an immediate surrender. He was not strong enough to force what he demanded, however. Washington wrote to him, paraphrasing a couplet in "Cato" by Addison,

"It is not in the power of man to command success, but you have done more, you have deserved it." General Montgomery also praised him. "Arnold is active, intelligent, and enterprising," he said.

Montgomery came to his help, and together they attacked the city. Montgomery was killed and Arnold wounded.

"Defeated and wounded as he was," says a contemporary writer, "he put his troops into such a situation as to keep them still formidable. With a mere handful of men, at one time not exceeding five hundred, he maintained a blockade of the strong fortress from which he had just been repulsed."

"I am in the way of my duty, and I know no fear," he declared.

"Happy for him had he fallen at this moment," Irving wrote. "Happy for him had he found a soldier's and a patriot's grave beneath the rock-built walls of Quebec. Those walls would have remained enduring monuments of his renown. His name, like that of Montgomery, would have been treasured up among the dearest recollections of his country, and that country would have been spared the traitorous blot that dims the bright page of its revolutionary history."

Arnold was no less distinguished for his valor than for his strategy. He won more laurels at Lake Champlain and everywhere proved his fearlessness.

"I need not enlarge upon his well-known activity, conduct, and bravery," said Washington when writing of Arnold. "The proofs he has given of all these have gained him the confidence of the public and of the army, the Eastern troops in particular."

In 1777, five of his inferiors in rank were promoted over his head to be major-generals, and he felt the reflection on his character keenly, though he allowed himself to be induced by Washington to retain his position in the army. At Saratoga he was again severely wounded. He himself said, "No public or private injury shall prevail on me to forsake the cause of my injured and oppressed country, until I see peace and liberty restored to her, or nobly die in the attempt."

Through his temper, which was violent, he made many enemies, however, and he never forgot the insult put upon him by the promotion of his fellow-officers.

He married Miss Margaret Shippen, of Philadelphia, and it was at her father's house that he probably met a young British officer, Major John André, of whom we shall hear more.

Arnold's conduct in the management of affairs while he was in command in Philadelphia caused much public dissatisfaction, and he himself requested Congress to direct a court-martial to investigate. He was acquitted, but Congress soon reopened the matter under two charges, and he was ordered to be reprimanded by the commander in chief.

This delicate duty Washington would probably have evaded had it been possible to do so without disobedience to superior authority, but he did it with the utmost delicacy.

His words are: —

"Our profession is the chastest of all: even the shadow of a fault tarnishes the luster of our finest achievements. The least inadvertence may rob us of the public favor, so hard to be acquired. I reprehend you for having forgotten, that, in proportion as you had rendered yourself formidable to our enemies, you should have been guarded and temperate in your deportment towards your fellow-citizens. Exhibit anew those noble qualities which have placed you on the list of our most valued commanders. I will myself furnish you, so far as it may be within my power, with opportunities for regaining the esteem of your country."

Arnold continued to feel that his sentence was

unmerited, and undoubtedly nursed his grievances more than a better-balanced man would have. Many persons are of the opinion that he was treated with animosity instead of fairness.

True to his word, Washington soon gave him an opportunity to recover public confidence by appointing him to command of the fortress of West Point and all the posts from Fishkill to King's Ferry, and nothing could have better shown Washington's own faith in him than this.

But he was disaffected. When the idea of treason first entered his mind we do not know. It probably grew like a worm in the bud, flashing upon him at secret intervals, at first with fear and shame, a thing so horrible to himself that he endeavored to shut it from him and discard it, then reasserting itself until at last it became familiar, reasonable, and endurable.

André became his chief instrument, and such treachery as he contemplated must have been a shock to both of them, and reduced their once open communications to stealthy whisperings in solitary places.

André's own principles must have revolted, for he was not only a man of intelligence and grace, but hitherto a man of honor. He was an officer of the Royal Fusileers, and had become aid-de-

camp successively to General Grey and to Sir Henry Clinton, with the rank of major. He was only twenty-three years old. His varied talents and engaging manners made him very popular, and he had many accomplishments. He was manager, actor, and scene-painter in those amateur theatricals in which the British officers delighted, and was a writer of amusing rhymes.

What Arnold proposed was the delivery of West Point, where he was stationed, to the British. He opened a correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton in a disguised handwriting, representing himself as a person of importance in the American army, who wished to join the cause of England if he could be assured of personal security and indemnity for whatever loss in property he might suffer. A British fleet under Admiral Rodney was to go up the Hudson to the Highlands at West Point, which would be surrendered by Arnold without opposition under the pretext that he had not a sufficient force to make resistance, and it was calculated that the immediate result would be the collapse of the American plans.

Arnold met André for a conference at midnight at the foot of a lonely and shadowy mountain called Long Clove, and the conference was carried on in darkness among the trees. They

talked in hushed and nervous voices, afraid of interruption, each alert for every sound. Morning came before they had finished, and then André, in possession of the plans of West Point, was persuaded by Arnold to return to New York by land instead of by water, though the ship *Vulture* was close at hand to receive him.

Arnold gave him a pass which read, "Permit Mr. John Anderson [the name which André had chosen] to pass the guards to White Plains, or below, if he desires, he being on public business by my direction."

Arnold left him at ten o'clock in the morning, and André passed a long day, attended by one Smith, who had come with Arnold. He glanced at the *Vulture* and wished himself on board, for once there he would be safe.

At about sunset André and Smith crossed the river from King's Ferry to Verplanck's Point, and between eight and nine o'clock they were stopped by a patrolling party. Arnold's pass protected them, though the man in charge was suspicious. A farmhouse was pointed out to them, at which they spent an uneasy night, and the next day they separated, Smith returning home and André going toward New York. He had not gone far when a man stepped out from some trees and

leveled a musket at him, bringing him to a stand, while two other men, also armed, appeared immediately afterwards. The first man wore a Hessian coat — the uniform of the German allies of the English — and André rejoiced in supposing himself among friends.

He exclaimed eagerly, "Gentlemen, I hope you belong to our party."

"What party?" they asked.

"The British," he said incautiously.

"We do," was the reply.

So, full of confidence, André admitted himself to be an English officer, and declared that he must not be delayed a moment, for he had to reach the British headquarters as soon as possible.

Suddenly the supposed Hessian turned upon him and said, "You are our prisoner. We are Americans!"

The speaker was a young patriot, John Paulding, who had twice been captured by the British and twice shut up in their prisons. The Hessian coat, which had deceived André and been the cause of his betrayal, had been given to him by one of his captors in exchange for a better garment.

André was full of surprise and consternation at the turn of events, but he was a man of resource, and laughed in Paulding's face.

"Why," he declared, "I am joking. I am not English, but an American going down to Dobbs Ferry to get information from below. See!"

And he produced Arnold's pass.

They read it and at first were half induced to believe him, but Paulding insisted on searching him. One after another his garments were removed, without revealing anything incriminating, when Paulding, more suspicious than the others, exclaimed, "Boys, I am not satisfied. His boots must come off."

And then the hidden documents were discovered!

André made offer after offer to buy his freedom.

"I will give you a hundred guineas," he said.

"No," they replied.

"I will give you a hundred guineas, and my horse, saddle, and bridle."

"No."

"I will give you anything you ask!" he continued desperately.

At this point Paulding cried out, "No, no, no! Not if you gave us ten thousand guineas!"

The papers found on André were sent to Washington, accompanied by a dignified letter in which he said, "The request I have made to your Excellency, and I am conscious I address myself well,

is that in any rigor policy may dictate, a decency of conduct towards me may mark that, though unfortunate, I am branded with nothing dishonorable, as no motive could be mine but the service of my King."

The British, of course, made every effort in behalf of André, but Washington was obdurate and would entertain no thought of his pardon. On one condition only would he release him, and that was that Arnold should be exchanged for him. This the British refused to do, and André was executed at Tappan, whence in 1821 his remains were taken to Westminster Abbey, where they now lie.

On the very day the treasonable conference between Arnold and André took place, Washington left Hartford for his headquarters on the Hudson, sending in advance a letter to Arnold, saying that he would breakfast with him.

He delayed on the way, and when the Marquis Lafayette called his attention to the fact that he would be late for breakfast, he said, "You young men are all in love with Mrs. Arnold. I see you are eager to be with her as soon as possible. Go you, then, and breakfast with her, and tell her not to wait for me. I must ride down and examine the redoubts on this side of the river, and will be with her shortly."

But Lafayette and General Knox remained with Washington. The news of their movements reached Arnold before they appeared, and while he and his wife sat at breakfast, a messenger came with a letter announcing André's arrest. Arnold was panic-stricken, and taking his wife aside and confessing his treason to her, hastened to a barge and fled down the river.

When Washington heard of all that had happened, he said sadly, as he told Lafayette and General Knox of it, "Whom can we trust now?"

An effort was made to intercept Arnold in his flight, but he succeeded in getting safely on board the British ship *Vulture*.

Soon afterwards Washington received a letter from Arnold in which the traitor tried to justify himself. "The heart which is conscious of its own rectitude," he wrote, "cannot attempt to palliate a step which the world may censure as wrong; I have ever acted from a principle of love to my country, since the commencement of the present unhappy contest between Great Britain and the colonies; the same principle of love to my country actuates my present conduct, however it may appear inconsistent to the world, who seldom judge right of any man's action. I ask no favor for myself. I have too often experienced

the ingratitude of my country to attempt it, but, from the known humanity of your Excellency, I am induced to ask your protection for Mrs. Arnold from every insult and injury that a mistaken vengeance by my country may expose her to. It ought to fall only on me; she is as good and as innocent as an angel, and is incapable of doing wrong."

Washington sympathized with this letter, and writing to Mrs. Arnold he informed her that while he had done all he could to arrest her husband, he had some pleasure in assuring her that the culprit had escaped.

Washington was not satisfied with letting Arnold escape with no other punishment than that inflicted by his own conscience. He discovered where the traitor was living, and formed a plan to capture him and bring him back to the American camp.

Sending for "Light Horse Harry" Lee, Washington said, "I have sent for you, Major Lee, in the expectation that you have in your corps individuals capable and willing to undertake a hazardous project. Whoever comes foward on this occasion will place me under great obligations personally, and in behalf of the United States I will reward him amply. No time is to be lost. He must proceed to-night."

Washington explained that Arnold was quartered next door to Sir Henry Clinton, the British general, at what was until recently No. 3 Broadway, and that he moved about the city carelessly, so that with some daring he might be seized and carried back within the American lines. To achieve his purpose it would be necessary for the man who attempted it to take the part of a deserter from the American army.

"Light Horse Harry" knew the very man for the task, the sergeant major of his cavalry, John Champe, who though reluctant to even appear as a deserter, obeyed the orders given him, and was pursued by others of his corps, who fully believed that he was the deserter he appeared. They chased him as far as Bergen, and there he hailed some British ships, one of which took him on board. He had brought his orderly book and other documents with him to support his claim that he was a deserter and that he, a traitor like Arnold himself, was ready to supply the British with information.

The captain of the ship believed his story, and landing him in New York, gave him a letter to Sir Henry.

The faithfulness of the regiment from which he appeared to have deserted was well known in the

British army, and what he had done was regarded as a sign of increasing dissatisfaction in the American army. So sincere appeared his desire to serve the king that he almost at once established himself in the confidence of Sir Henry.

At that very time Arnold was forming a legion of royalists and deserters, and to him Champe was sent as a recruit.

In the rear of Arnold's quarters was a garden running down to the water's edge, and Champe ascertained that it was Arnold's custom to walk here at a certain hour of the evening before going to bed. He accordingly arranged to kidnap him one night and to convey him to a boat which would be waiting on the river. If there was interference, Champe and his two confederates would say that they were conveying a drunken man to the guardhouse. Every precaution was taken. The railings of the garden were loosened, so that they could easily be lifted out to give access to the street, and when all had been arranged, Champe wrote to "Light Horse Harry" Lee, informing him of the night on which the adventure would take place. Lee was to meet him in some woods on the Hoboken shore, with three horses, and then they were to make all speed to the American camp.

Lee concealed himself at the appointed place,

and waited there till dawn, when he returned to camp greatly disappointed. Champe's plans had failed. On the very day he had fixed for the capture, Arnold changed his quarters, and instead of crossing the Hudson that night, Champe was ordered on board a British ship for Virginia, which carried part of an expedition under Arnold.

It was long afterwards that he made his escape from the British camp, and Arnold probably never knew how nearly this trooper under him had delivered him into the hands of General Washington.

Arnold, under the terms he had exacted beforehand, was made a brigadier-general in the British army and was paid a large sum of money by the British. He published an address in which he endeavored to vindicate himself. He said he considered the Declaration of Independence unwise, and he protested against the treaty with France, "a proud, ancient, and crafty foe, the enemy of the Protestant faith and of real liberty." But he never ceased to be held in contempt by both the British and the Americans, and never found a friend among those to whom he had sold himself.

Our final glimpse of Arnold is pitiable. During the last days of his life, which were passed in London, his mind constantly reverted to his old friendship with Washington.

His American uniform he had always kept, and when he felt that his end was near he put it on. "Let me die," he said, "in this old uniform in which I fought my battles. May God forgive me for ever putting on any other."

## CHAPTER XIII

### Our First President

Though he was supposed to be resting there, Washington found plenty to do on his return to Mount Vernon. Crowds of visitors came to see him there, and all spoke of his simplicity. "My manner of living is plain," he himself said, "and I do not mean to be put out of it. A glass of wine and a bit of mutton are always ready, and such as will be content to partake of them are always welcome. Those who expect more will be disappointed."

The estate had suffered from neglect and the ravages of war, and it was his desire to restore it to its former perfection. "The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs," he wrote to a friend in England, "the better I am pleased with them, insomuch that I can nowhere find so much satisfaction as in those innocent and useful pursuits."

A visitor to Mount Vernon at this time described his experience thus: "I trembled with awe as I came into the presence of the great man. I

found him at table with Mrs. Washington and her grandchildren, where he soon put me at my ease by unbending in a free and affable conversation. I observed a peculiarity in his smile which seemed to illuminate his eye; his whole countenance beamed with intelligence, while it commanded confidence and respect. I found him kind and benignant in the domestic circle; revered and beloved by all around him."

His servants seemed to watch his eye, and to anticipate his every wish. He seldom laughed, though his smile was frequent. His responsibilities hung heavily upon him. He was conscientious in the highest degree, and let nothing pass without weighing it.

One more picture of the domestic life at Mount Vernon, this written by a friend of Nellie Custis, Mrs. Washington's granddaughter: —

"When ten o'clock came, Mrs. Washington retired and her granddaughter accompanied her, and read a chapter and a psalm from the old family Bible. All then knelt together in prayer, and when Mrs. Washington's maid had prepared her for bed, Nellie sang a soothing hymn, and leaning over her, received from her some words of counsel and her kiss and blessing."

That granddaughter states that Washington

spoke little, and never of himself. "I never heard him relate a single act of his life during the war," she says.

Though he was stately in manner, he was modest. His equanimity showed itself on all occasions, and in all things he was without the least taint of self-consciousness. Had we met him in the grounds of Mount Vernon as he went about planting and transplanting, surveying his acres with all the love and knowledge of a woodsman and gardener, we should have taken him for an amiable country gentleman, rather than for one of the most famous men in the world, whose name was now on every lip. He would have been quite silent about himself, but eloquent about his trees and crops and cattle.

Literary men begged material for memoirs from Washington, and portrait painters gave him no rest; all of them wanted to write about him or to paint his portrait.

He said, "'In for a penny, in for a pound,' is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touch of painter's pencils, that I am now altogether at their beck, and sit, like patience on a monument, whilst they are delineating the lines of my face. It is a proof, among many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish."

"I found," wrote Stuart, the artist, "that it was difficult to interest him in conversation while I was taking his portrait. I began on the revolution — the battles of Monmouth and Princeton, but he was absolutely dumb. After a while I got on horses. Then I touched the right chord."

All the time, however, he was thinking of the future of his country, and he was one of the first to perceive the greatness of its destiny, especially the possibilities of the West. The thirteen states were jealous of each other and discontented. Virginia wanted one thing, New York another, and New England another. All were at variance. He saw the necessity of bringing them together and creating a national feeling among them. They were eager to preserve their own sovereignty and to be independent of one another.

As Senator Henry Cabot Lodge has written, "Washington at a single step passed from being a Virginian to being an American, and in so doing he stood alone."

Among his plans was one to open the western country by means of inland navigation. For this purpose he revived a company which had been abandoned on account of the war, and when a bonus in the form of stock in the company was offered to him he refused it, saying that he thought

it would make him look like a pensioner or dependent to accept such a gratuity. At last he was persuaded to take it, but he did not keep it for himself; he endowed two schools with it, and they are to this day enjoying the income.

Against obstacles and delays he persisted in his ideal, and only by prodigious labor achieved it.

On September 17, 1787, the Constitution of the United States was adopted by the convention that formulated it, and it may be said that Washington was the father of it. Then a President was needed, and against his wishes he was unanimously chosen for that high office. The long rest he had contemplated was not for him.

"At ten o'clock," he writes in his diary, "I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York, with the best disposition to render service to my country, in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

To his friend General Knox, he wrote, "My movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of his execution, so unwilling am I, in the evening of a life nearly

consumed in public affairs, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties, without the competency of political skill, abilities, and inclination, which are necessary to manage the helm. . . . Integrity and firmness are all I can promise. These, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me, although I may be deserted by all men, for of the consolations which are to be derived from these, under any circumstances, the world cannot deprive me."

There is a letter of his showing the humility with which he approached the responsibilities of his new position: —

"I greatly fear that my countrymen will expect too much from me. I fear, if the issue of public measures should not correspond with their sanguine expectations, they will turn the extravagant, and I might say undue praises, which they are heaping on me at this moment, into equally extravagant, though I will fondly hope unwonted, censures."

On this Washington Irving commented thus: "Little was his modest spirit aware that the praises so dubiously received were but the opening notes of a theme that was to increase from age to age, to pervade all lands, and endure throughout all generations."

At Alexandria some friends gave him a farewell

dinner. "All that now remains for me," he said on that occasion, "is to commit myself and you to the care of that Being who, on a former occasion, happily brought us together after a long and distressing separation. Perhaps the same gracious Providence will again indulge me. But words fail me. Unutterable sensations must then be left to more expressive silence, while from an aching heart I bid all my affectionate friends and kind neighbors farewell."

Great honors came to him on his way to New York. Every village and town turned out to see him and greet him. He entered Philadelphia under triumphal arches, and young girls walked before him, singing and strewing flowers.

At Trenton, where twelve years before he had crossed the Delaware in darkness and storm, the sun now shone. On the bridge that covers the river, the ladies of the town had erected another triumphal arch, bearing an inscription, "The defender of the mothers will be the protector of the daughters."

At Elizabeth he was met by congressional committees, and he went on board a barge manned by thirteen pilots in white uniform, who rowed him to New York. The vessels in the harbor, dressed in flags, fired salutes in his honor. Music mingled with the sound of the guns.

On April 30 he was inaugurated in New York City. There were religious services in all the churches, and prayers were murmured for the blessing of Heaven on the new government. At twelve o'clock the city troops paraded in front of his house, and half an hour later he rode in a state carriage to the hall where the Sub-Treasury now stands in Wall Street, followed or preceded by the troops, his aid-de-camp, various officials, foreign ministers, and a long train of citizens.

The Vice-President, John Adams, the Senate, and the House of Representatives were assembled. In the center of a balcony was a table, covered with crimson velvet, on which rested a beautiful Bible. There the ceremony was performed in presence of crowds of people, and when he appeared he was greeted with the greatest enthusiasm. He was much agitated by the welcome the people gave him. Advancing to the front of the table, he put his hand on his heart, bowed several times, and then sat on a chair near the table. The Bible was held up to him on a crimson cushion, and he reverently placed his hand upon it as he received the oath of office.

Very solemnly he said, "I swear — so help me God."

The Chancellor of the State of New York then

exclaimed, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!"

Artillery was discharged, and all the bells of the city rang out in joyful peals, while the cheering was so loud and continuous that it almost drowned the guns and the bells.

Another service was held in St. Paul's Church, the church that still stands on Broadway, and the remainder of the day was spent in feasting and rejoicing.

## CHAPTER XIV

### Martha Washington

Washington's married life was a very happy one, and Martha, his wife, was his almost inseparable companion. At the age of seventeen she became the reigning belle of Virginia society, and at that early age married her first husband, Daniel Parke Custis, much older than herself, who died seven years later, leaving her with two children.

A year afterwards, when she was visiting a friend, a young officer called at the house and was about to depart in a hurry, being engaged in important government business, when the host, wishing to keep him overnight, promised him that if he would stay he should be introduced to one of the most charming and richest widows in all Virginia.

The widow was Martha Custis, and the young officer was George Washington He rode the chestnut brown horse which General Braddock had given him, and was attended as usual by

Braddock's old servant, Bishop. So he was prevailed on to stay, and that evening met for the first time the lady who was destined to become his wife. His name was, of course, very familiar to her, and he appeared in the light of a hero to her, for Virginia was then resounding with his praises.

"There was an urchin [Cupid] in the drawing room, more powerful than King George and all his governors!" wrote an observer. "Subtle as a sphinx, he had hidden the important dispatches which Washington carried from the soldier's sight, shut up his ears from the summons of the tell-tale clock, and was playing such pranks with the bravest heart in Christendom that it fluttered with the excess of a new-found happiness."

He left the next day, but almost immediately returned to call on the young lady in her own home. Before that second meeting with her ended, they were betrothed, and they were married on January 6, 1759, with much ceremony.

On that occasion Washington wore a coat of blue cloth, lined with red silk and ornamented with silver trimmings; his waistcoat was of white satin embroidered; his shoe and knee buckles were of gold; his hair was powdered, and by his side hung a dress-sword.

The bride was attired in a white satin quilted

petticoat, and a heavy corded white silk overskirt; high-heeled shoes of white satin, with diamond buckles; point lace ruffles; pearl necklace, earrings and bracelet; pearl ornaments were in her hair.

It was for Virginia in those days a splendid and surpassing affair. From the church the bride with attendant ladies drove back home in a coach drawn by six horses, with liveried black postilions, and accompanied by Washington mounted on his richly caparisoned charger. The old servant, Bishop, proud of his position and toploftical to all but his master and mistress, was also there in his finest clothes.

"I have heard much of that marriage from the lips of old servants who were participants in the scene," said a relative of the Washingtons to the historian, Benson J. Lossing. "There was one negro named Cully, whose enthusiasm would kindle whenever the subject was touched upon. I said to him one day when he was in the hundredth year of his age: —

"'And so, Cully, you remember when Colonel Washington came a-courting your mistress?'

"'Indeed I do, marster. He was dar on'y fo' times afo' de wedding, for yo' see he was in de war all de time. We couldn't keep our eyes off

him, he was so grand. An' Bishop was most as grand as him.'

"'And the wedding!' I asked.

"'Great times, great times,' Cully replied. 'We shall never see de like again. Mo' hosses an' car'ges an' fine ladies and fine gen'men dan when missus was mar'ied afo'.'

"'And how did Colonel Washington look?'

"'Neber see'd de like, sir! Never de likes of him, though I've seen many in my day. He was so tall, so straight, an' so handsom', and he set a horse, an' rid with such an air! Oh, he was gran'! Yaas, he was like no one else. Many of de grandest gen'lemen in gold lace was at de weddin,' but none looked so fine as the Colonel himself.'

"'And your mistress?'

"Cully raised both hands and exclaimed, 'Oh, she was bootiful and so good, was mistress.'"

For several months they lived in her house, known as "White House," and then went to Mount Vernon, which was redecorated and improved. Washington received a wedding present from the King of Prussia, Frederick the Great, inscribed "From the oldest general in Europe to the greatest general in the world."

The Washingtons lived in abundance, but without extravagance. Mrs. Washington was an

excellent housewife. So constant was their hospitality that Washington wrote in his diary in 1768, "Would any one believe that with one hundred cows, actually reported at the last enumeration of the cattle, I should be obliged to buy butter for my family!"

Martha Washington was small, dainty, and pretty, not brilliant, but good, a woman whose home was her sanctuary, and the source of all happiness when her husband was with her. Washington treated his stepson and stepdaughter as if they were his own. The stepdaughter died young, and her brother married. Mrs. Washington could not attend the ceremony, but sent a beautiful letter to the bride: "My dear Nelly: God took from me a daughter when June roses were blooming. He has now given me another daughter when winter winds are blowing, to warm my heart again. I am as happy as one so afflicted and so blessed can be. Pray receive my benediction and a wish that you may long live the loving wife of my happy son, and a loving daughter of your affectionate mother, M. Washington."

When the Revolution began, Mrs. Washington was courageous and full of fortitude, though aware of the distress it was bound to cause. Somebody wrote to her of the "folly" of Washington's taking

part in it, and she nobly replied, "I foresee consequences, dark days and dark nights; domestic happiness suspended, social enjoyments abandoned; property of every kind put in jeopardy by war perhaps; neighbors and friends at variance, and eternal separations on earth. But my mind is made up, my heart is in the cause. George is right; he is always right. God has promised to protect the righteous, and I will trust Him."

Edmund Pendleton said of her, "I was much pleased with Mrs. Washington and her spirit. She seemed ready to make any sacrifice, and was very cheerful, though I knew she felt very anxious. She talked like a Spartan mother to her son on going to battle. 'I hope you will all stand firm, I know George will,' she said. The dear little woman was busy from morning until night with domestic duties, but she gave us much time in conversation and affording us entertainment. When we set off in the morning, she stood in the door and cheered us with good words, 'God be with you, gentlemen.'"

After the war began, she joined her husband at Cambridge, and they put up in the mansion which afterwards became the home of the poet Longfellow, and which is still in possession of the Longfellow family. Though unassuming and unpreten-

tious, a truly womanly woman, she made a little court there, and her patriotism inspired all who came in contact with her. Her husband often deferred to her judgment.

Her journey to Cambridge was made in the dead of winter in a carriage, of course, over the lonely and rough country roads, some of them mere ruts in deep mud, which stretched between isolated towns and settlements from Virginia to Massachusetts. There were many perils on the way, not only from wild animals and ruffians, but also from the enemy, who at one time thought of kidnapping her and holding her as a hostage.

Again, when she had returned to Virginia, a plot was made to ravage Mount Vernon and capture her, but it was frustrated, as was another plot against Washington. An Irishman named Hickey bribed one of the General's servants to poison him, but the servant forewarned him and he did not touch the poisoned dish. Hickey was seized at once, and executed in the presence of twenty thousand persons.

The General became so active in the field that seventeen months passed without Lady Washington, as his wife was called, seeing him, but after that long separation they were reunited at Whitemarsh, near Philadelphia, just before the terrible

march to Valley Forge, on which she accompanied him, remaining at his side during the winter. Every day from early morning till late at night she was busy providing comforts for the sick soldiers, mending clothes and knitting socks for them. She was simple in her own attire for the benefit of others, and dressed herself and her servants in homespun cloth made at Mount Vernon.

"Yesterday, with several others, I visited Lady Washington at headquarters," a lady wrote. "We expected to find the wealthy wife of the great general elegantly dressed, for the time of our visit had been fixed; but, instead, she was neatly attired in a plain brown habit. Her gracious and cheerful manner delighted us all, but we felt rebuked by the plainness of her apparel and her example of persistent industry, while we were extravagantly dressed idlers, a name not very creditable in these perilous times. She seems very wise in experience, kind-hearted and winning in all her ways. She talked much of the sufferings of the poor soldiers, especially of the sick ones. Her heart seemed to be full of compassion for them."

Even after Washington had become President, his wife adhered to her simple way of life. At her receptions, when the clock struck nine, she would say with a sweet smile, "This is the hour when the

President retires, and I usually precede him." By ten o'clock all the lights in her house were extinguished.

Living with the Washingtons at Mount Vernon was Mrs. Washington's granddaughter, Nellie Custis, one of the most beautiful and most brilliant young women of her time. "I was young and romantic then," Nellie has said, "and fond of wandering alone in the woods of Mount Vernon by moonlight. Grandmamma thought it wrong and unsafe, and scolded and coerced me into a promise that I would not wander in the woods again, unaccompanied. But I was missing one evening, and was brought home from the interdicted woods to the drawing-room, where the General was walking up and down with his hands behind him, as was his wont. Grandmamma, seated in her great armchair, opened a severe reproach."

Poor Nellie was reminded of her promises and taxed with her delinquency. She knew she had done wrong, admitted her fault, and made no excuse, but when there was a slight pause, she moved as if to retire from the room. She was just shutting the door, when she heard the General interceding in her behalf.

"My dear," he said to Mrs. Washington, "I should say no more — perhaps she was not alone."

Nellie stopped in her retreat, and reopening the door, advanced to the General with a firm step.

"Sir," she said, "you brought me up to speak the truth, and when I told Grandmamma I was alone I hope you believe I was alone?"

The General made one of his most magnificent bows, and replied, "My child, I beg your pardon."

When Nellie was about sixteen years old, she attended her first ball, and wrote a description of it to Washington. After alluding to something she said about her indifference to young men, and her determination never to give herself a moment's uneasiness on account of them, he gravely warned her not to be too sure of herself.

"In the composition of the human frame there is a good deal of inflammable matter, which, when the torch is put to it, may burst into flame," he told her, and continued thus: "Love is said to be an involuntary passion, and it is contended that it cannot be resisted. This is true in part only, for like all things else, when nourished and supplied plentifully with aliment, it is rapid in its progress; but let these be withdrawn, and it may be stifled in its birth, or much stinted in its growth. . . . Nothing short of good sense and an easy, unaffected conduct can draw the line between prudery and coquetry. It would be no great

departure from the truth to say that it rarely happens otherwise than that a thorough-paced coquette dies in celibacy, as a punishment for her attempts to mislead others by encouraging looks, words, and actions, given for no other purpose than to draw men on to make overtures that they may be rejected."

Kindly old man! He could steer the ship of state and also, as he thought, the romantic fancies of a pretty young woman like Nellie Custis!

In spite of her asserted indifference to young men, she was married to his nephew on Washington's birthday, February 22, 1799. She wanted him to wear a new and splendid uniform that had been made for him, but he appeared in the old blue and buff that he had worn in many battles of the Revolutionary War. The delighted girl threw her arms around Washington's neck and cried, "After all, I love you better in that."

## CHAPTER XV

### Washington's Friends

Chief among the friends of Washington was the Marquis Lafayette who came of a noble family which for more than three centuries had been distinguished in French history. He had been the pet of royalty, a page to the French queen Marie Antoinette, and a lieutenant in the Royal Musketeers, a body of soldiers charged with the defense of the king's person. All his relatives were people of the highest rank.

It might have been expected that amid such surroundings he would have been an aristocrat in disposition, but he proved to be a true republican. The news of what the Americans were doing for themselves inflamed him in the cause of liberty and the rights of man.

Against some opposition he came to America in 1777 in a ship which he had purchased for the purpose, and landing at Georgetown, S. C., he traveled on horseback to Philadelphia, where

Congress was in session. The journey, which took a month, was beset with countless difficulties.

Here he was, a high-bred, courtly young gentleman of charming manners, offering his services in the army without pay, and asking nothing more than the satisfaction of helping a cause in which he believed, and the chance to win what glory he could.

We can imagine the older men looking at him askance, smiling at his youthfulness, his ardor, and his aristocratic manners, and doubting his efficiency. He was a mere boy, not twenty years old.

Gloom spread over his face as he heard the decision of Congress. They had received so many applications from foreign officers for positions that they could consider no more. They admired him but they could not make use of him; they were very sorry — and so forth!

He pleaded so earnestly and so persistently that, remembering he asked no pay, they at last gave him a commission, and the next day he met Washington for the first time.

At once that friendship began which lasted through their lives. Washington was attracted to him from the first, and as his knowledge of him increased, he addressed him in such terms of affec-

tion and admiration as he used toward no other man, while the young Lafayette on his part bore himself with no less affection and the deepest reverence toward the older.

The "Conway Cabal," as that group of conspirators against Washington was called, attempted to use Lafayette as a tool, but he detected their purposes, and never wavered in his loyalty to his chief.

His military career justified Washington's confidence in him. At the battle of the Brandywine he was wounded in the leg. At the battle of Monmouth Court House he fought gallantly and with excellent judgment. He served also in Rhode Island under Sullivan. But it was as a sort of unofficial ambassador from this country to France that he proved most useful.

He returned to France in an American frigate called the *Alliance*, the crew of which mutinied, plotting to seize her and take her into a British port, after murdering all on board, except Lafayette, who was to be delivered as a suitable prisoner in exchange for General Burgoyne. The plot was discovered and frustrated, and when he arrived in France, Lafayette induced the French government to send an army and a fleet to support the Americans under Washington.

He then returned to America, and his place from first to last was with the Americans, not with the French he had brought with him. He rejoined Washington at once, and arriving at the time Arnold's treason was discovered, served on the board of fourteen generals who sentenced André to death.

The troops under him were, like most of the American army, in a wretched condition, their clothes hanging from them in disreputable looking rags. At his own cost, for he was rich and generous, Lafayette provided them with proper garments. The British generals spoke of him contemptuously as "the boy," but he constantly proved his manhood, and gave them many uncomfortable experiences. While he was fighting Lord Cornwallis, previous to the surrender at Yorktown, his conduct was skillful and prudent, and contributed in no slight degree toward the grand result.

Soon after the surrender, he became interested in the abolition of slavery and purchased a large plantation in Cayenne, where it was his purpose to educate the slaves with a view to their gradual emancipation, an experiment carefully followed by Washington.

Meanwhile, Lafayette went back to France, which was already in the throes of the great

revolution, and in the confusion there he was captured and sent to an Austrian prison, where he was treated with barbarous cruelty. Think of him, so young and so refined, so pure and so brave, shut up for four years in a loathsome dungeon! Many prominent persons in England and America interceded for him, Washington among them. Finally came Napoleon who set him free, and Lafayette returned to his home, thankful to his deliverer but unwilling to enter his service.

During Napoleon's rule Lafayette lived quietly at his country home, and when he was sixty-seven years old he revisited the United States. Here he was received with the greatest enthusiasm and honor. Until the end of his long life he retained his love for one great cause — the cause of liberty and humanity.

Next to Lafayette in Washington's affection stood Henry Knox. Left fatherless when he was about to be graduated from the Boston Grammar School, he, the seventh of ten sons, became the sole support of his mother. He found a humble place in the bookstore of Wharton & Bowes in Cornhill, Boston, and delighted in the situation, for at odd moments he could dip into the volumes which surrounded him. Not satisfied with merely "dipping," he took home books to read, and thus ac-

quired much miscellaneous knowledge. He must have been able to do with little sleep, for he was no mere bookworm, but was noted for his stalwart strength and spirit.

In those days there was a good deal of rivalry between the boys of the South end of Boston, and those of the North end. It was the custom then to celebrate Guy Fawkes' Day as it is still celebrated in England on November 5, with processions and the burning of effigies. One procession was not enough; both North end and South end had each to have one, and when they met in the streets there were savage tussles between them.

On one occasion a broken wheel disabled the vehicle on which the effigies of Knox's party were carried, and rather than submit to the disgrace of withdrawing from the procession, Knox took up the heavy load and bore it upon his shoulders, until the place was reached for burning it, amid the cheers of the people and the discharge of hundreds of squibs and rockets.

In time, Knox opened a bookstore of his own, near that of his former employers, and it soon became the resort of the fashionable people of Boston. One of his customers was the daughter of the royal secretary of the province, whom he afterwards married, much against her parent's wishes. They

were aristocrats, those parents, and thought Knox far below her, but before long they saw that she had made no mistake in marrying one who though but "a tradesman" had a martial spirit and conspicuous ability.

Inducements were offered him to join the British army, in which his wife's brother was a lieutenant. He would not listen to them. He was active on the American side, even before the conflicts at Lexington and Concord, and was the master spirit in the formidable work of the Americans around Boston.

Though a bookseller by trade, Henry Knox was a born soldier, and in the early days of the war he won Washington's heart by offering to go on an arduous expedition to provide him with artillery and ordnance stores, the need for which was imperative during the long conflict with the British around Boston. That expedition involved a winter journey to Lake Champlain, and back, across frozen rivers and lakes, and over roads deep in snow and mire. But Knox accomplished it, and brought back with him more than fifty cannon, mortars, and howitzers, besides supplies of lead and flint. These were carried on a long train of sledges drawn by oxen all the way from Ticonderoga, and Knox was received with acclaim for

his endurance and his pertinacity. He had already distinguished himself by his valor at Bunker Hill; henceforth he was to be in constant communication with Washington, and one of his most trusted and admired officers.

Another warm friend of Washington's was Alexander Hamilton. We have seen how he first attracted Washington by his energy in building the fortification at Harlem Heights. He was born on January 11, 1757, on the island of Nevis in the West Indies, the son of an unsuccessful Scottish merchant and a lady of Huguenot descent. Hamilton's friends called him "the little lion" from the vigor and dignity of his speech. He was considered handsome, though undersized. His dark, deepset eyes had a commanding quality, which often held spellbound those who listened to him. Like many others in Revolutionary years, he was early in life thrown on his own resources, and was only thirteen years old when he was placed in the office of Nicholas Cruger, a West Indian merchant, where his diligence and intelligence soon became evident. So clever was he that his relatives and friends contrived the means for improving his education, and sent him to King's College, now Columbia University, in New York.

While there, after some debate with himself, he

espoused the American cause, and amazed a great audience by speaking without preparation from the platform at a public meeting. Below the normal stature, he looked even younger than his seventeen years, while he overwhelmed his listeners by his extraordinary eloquence. From that moment he was a marked man; he not only became captain of a troop of artillery, he constantly spoke and wrote articles and pamphlets in the fight for civil liberty. When he was only twenty, Washington took him on his staff as lieutenant-colonel.

More than a soldier, Alexander Hamilton was a statesman, and in time he became Secretary of the Treasury. Washington said of him, "Few of his age have a more general knowledge, and no one is more firmly engaged in the cause, or exceeds him in probity and sterling virtue."

He married the daughter of General Philip Schuyler, rich and eminent and a loyal patriot; and though needy, Hamilton refused the aid offered by his father-in-law while he struggled to obtain his legal education.

An extract from a letter written by Mrs. Washington to Mrs. Hamilton during an illness of Hamilton, shows how friendly the two families were: —

"I am truly glad, my dear Madam, to hear Colonel Hamilton is better bodily. You have my

prayers and warmest wishes for his recovery. I hope you will take care of yourself, as you know it is necessary for your family. We are lucky to have those bottles of the old wine that was carried to the East Indies, which are sent to you, with three of another kind, also good. We have a plenty to supply you, as often as you please to send for it. The president joins me in devoutly wishing for Colonel Hamilton's recovery."

After all his brilliant services to the young republic, and they are said to have been next in value to Washington's, his end was tragic. He had bitterly opposed Aaron Burr in politics, and at last received a challenge from him to fight a duel. He disapproved of that foolish way of settling disputes, but shrank from the possibility of being thought a coward.

"I have resolved," he said, "to let Colonel Burr fire without returning his shot, so that he may have an opportunity to pause and repent."

The meeting took place at seven o'clock in the morning in the Elysian Fields, as some meadows near the Palisades of the Hudson at Weehawken were called. At the first word Aaron Burr fired, and Hamilton instantly fell; he was mortally wounded, though he survived until the next day.

His wonderful work as Secretary of the Treasury

won from Daniel Webster his famous tribute: "He smote the rock of the national resources and touched the dead corpse of public credit which sprang upon its feet. . . . The fabled birth of Minerva from the brain of Jove was hardly more sudden or more perfect than that of the financial system of the United States from the conceptions of Alexander Hamilton."

"His purity," says Goldwin Smith, who was no indulgent critic, "was above suspicion; the attempts of his enemies to impeach it totally failed. Equally above suspicion was his patriotism, and if, in the fierce excitement of political conflict, he did what could not be defended, these were but spots on a character otherwise stainless."

Another friend for whom Washington had affection was Colonel Daniel Morgan, the rifleman who fought valiantly both in the North and in the South, for he became the famous hero of the battle of the Cowpens. Here the loss of the Americans was only seventy-two while the British lost more than eight hundred.

One night, early in the war, Washington said to Morgan, "I have sent for you, Colonel Morgan, to intrust to your courage and sagacity a small but very important enterprise. I wish you to reconnoiter the enemy's lines, with a view to your

ascertaining correctly the positions of their newly constructed redoubts; also the encampments of the British troops that have lately arrived and those of the Hessian auxiliaries. Select, sir, an officer, a non-commissioned officer, and about twenty picked men, and under the cover of night, proceed with all possible caution, get as near as you can, learn all you can, and by dawn retire, and make your report to headquarters.

"But mark me, Colonel Morgan, mark me well: on no account whatever are you to bring on any skirmishing with the enemy. If discovered, make a speedy retreat; let nothing induce you to fire a single shot. I repeat, sir, that no force of circumstances will excuse the discharge of a single rifle on your part, and for the extreme precision of these orders, permit me to say I have my reasons."

Morgan, dashing and eager, listened attentively. Filling two glasses of wine, the general continued, "And now we will drink a good night and success to the enterprise."

Morgan did what he was told as to the observations, and was returning when his men saw some of the enemy ride along the road. The temptation was too great for them, and they fired, contrary to Washington's explicit order.

Morgan, after they reached camp, was reflecting uncomfortably on what would happen to him when Alexander Hamilton approached him and said, "I am ordered, Colonel Morgan, to inquire whether the firing just now heard came from your detachment."

"It did, sir," Morgan replied unhappily.

"Then, Colonel, I am further ordered to require your immediate attendance on his Excellency, who is approaching."

Washington appeared.

"Can it be possible that my aid-de-camp has informed me aright? Can it be possible," he demanded with much sternness, "after the orders you received last evening, that the firing we have heard proceeded from your detachment? Surely, sir, my orders were so explicit as not to be easily misunderstood."

Shaking in his boots, Morgan uncovered and replied, "Your Excellency's orders were perfectly understood, and agreeably to the same, I proceeded with a select party to reconnoiter the enemy's lines. We succeeded beyond our expectations, and I was returning to headquarters to make my report when, having halted a few moments to rest our men, we discovered a party of horsemen coming out from the enemy's lines. They came up

immediately to the spot where we lay concealed by the brushwood. There they halted, and gathered together like a flock of partridges, affording me so tempting an opportunity of annoying my enemies that — that — that — may it please your Excellency, flesh and blood could not refrain."

Washington turned away without a word of reproach, and Morgan said afterwards, "What could the unusual clemency of the commander in chief toward so insubordinate a soldier as I was mean? Was it that by attacking my enemy wherever I could find him, and the attack being crowned with success, should plead in bar of the disobedience of a positive order? Certainly not. Was it that Washington knew that I loved, nay adored him above all human beings? That knowledge would not have helped a feather in the scale of his military justice. In short, the whole affair is explained in five words: It was my first offence."

Possibly, also, as Mr. Norman Hapgood says, part of the explanation lay in the fact that Washington loved daring and successful fighters like Arnold, Morgan, and Wayne, as he loved dashing and cultivated young men like Hamilton, Laurens, and Lafayette.

## CHAPTER XVI

### Washington's Enemies

More trouble came to Washington through what was called the "Whiskey Rebellion." There were large numbers of Scotch-Irish in Pennsylvania who resisted taxation of the liquor they produced, and it was necessary to send an army against them to enforce the law. There was trouble also in the foreign relations of the country, for England still retained posts in the West, and Spain still claimed the Mississippi. France and England were again at war, and France was disposed to browbeat America. In violation of the neutrality laws, she was fitting out privateers in this country against England, with the approval of a part of the people, but with Washington's disapproval.

"What," said the President, "is to be done in the case of the *Little Sarah*, now at Chester?"

The *Little Sarah*, a captured British ship, was one of the privateers. "Is the minister of the French Republic to set the acts of this government aside with impunity? And then threaten the

executive with an appeal to the people? What must the world think of such conduct, and of the government of the United States in submitting to it?"

Edmund Charles Genêt, the French minister, promised that the ship should not sail until the dispute was settled, but notwithstanding that she sneaked out to sea by his connivance.

Washington was furious. He would have liked to order Genêt out of the country at once, but he wanted, if possible, to avoid any action that might arouse the anger of France. After some delay Washington did force Genêt's retirement, and, afraid of going back to France, that gentleman remained quietly in this country and was seldom heard of again. He settled in New York City and became one of the founders of the Tammany Society.

At the same time there was much friction with England, which was less popular than France, and it often appeared as if the war, so recently ended, must be followed by another. Washington was eager for peace. To an English nobleman he wrote, "I believe it is the sincere wish of United America to have nothing to do with political intrigues, or the squabbles of European nations; but on the contrary to exchange commodities and

live in peace and amity with all the inhabitants of the earth. Under such a system, if we are allowed to pursue it, the agricultural and mechanical arts, the wealth and population of these states, will increase with that degree of rapidity as to baffle all calculation, and must surpass any idea your Lordship can hitherto have entertained."

But many of the people wanted to reopen the war and resented Washington's opposition to it. Stirred up by Genêt, they threatened day after day in Philadelphia to drag the President out of his house and to overthrow the government. He had made a treaty with England which they did not like. Copies of it were burned in the streets, and John Jay, who had negotiated it, was hanged in effigy. But Washington was, as usual, as firm as a rock, and despite abuse and threats he enforced the treaty.

Fisher Ames of Massachusetts, a delicate man and ill at the time, made a memorable speech in Congress in behalf of the treaty.

"Even the minutes I have spent in expostulating," he said, "have their value, because they protract the crisis and the short period, in which alone we may resolve to escape it. Yet I have, perhaps, as little personal interest in the event as any one here. There is, I believe, no member

who will not think his chance to be a witness of the consequences to be greater than mine. If, however, the vote should pass to reject — even I, slender and almost broken as my hold on life is, may outlive the government and constitution of my country."

John Adams, then Vice-President, thus described the speech in a letter to his wife: —

"Judge Iredell and I happened to sit together. Our feelings beat in unison. 'How great he is,' said Iredell.

"'Noble,' said I.

"'Bless my soul,' Iredell continued. 'I never heard anything so great since I was born.'

"'Divine!' said I, and then we went on with our interjections, not to say tears, to the end — not a dry eye in the house."

The treaty was ratified on April 30, 1796, in spite of all opposition. Ames's speech is regarded as one of the most eloquent ever made in Congress.

Edmund Randolph, who had been a protégé of Washington's, played a treacherous part in the French trouble, and Washington thus exposed him and cast him off: "Peyton Randolph [Edmund's father] was my dearest friend. He died suddenly in October, 1775. In an hour of affectionate and solemn communion, in which he had expressed an

expectation that before long he would be thus removed, he begged me to be a friend to his nephew and adopted son, Edmund. I promised that I would be to him as a father; that promise has been faithfully kept. If, in any instance, I have been swayed by personal and private feelings in the exercise of political influence or of official patronage and power it has been in this.

"Upon taking command of the army of the United Colonies in June, 1775, I made him, not then twenty-two years of age, one of my aids. . . . My entire interest was actively given to place and advance him in the path of political and professional promotion. By the aid of my influence he rose from one distinguished post to another in rapid succession. . . . I made him Attorney-General in the States, at the organization of the Federal government, a member of my Cabinet from the first. In 1794 I made him Secretary of State, placing him at the head of my official council; he has been admitted to my utmost confidence. I have held with him a daily intimacy. He occupied the chief seat among the guests at my table."

At this point Washington rose to his feet, his whole aspect and manner showing the gathering storm.

"While at the head of my Cabinet he has been

secretly, but actively, plotting with the opponents of my administration, consulting and contracting with them for the defeat of its measures; he, the Secretary of State, to whose trust the foreign relations of the country are confided, has been conducting an intrigue with the ambassador of a foreign government, to promote the designs of that government, which were to overthrow the administration, of which he, Randolph, was a trusted member, receiving from that ambassador money to aid in accomplishing that object; soliciting from him more for the same purpose — all this time I have had entire faith in him, and been led by that faith to pay deference to his representations, to delay ratification of the English treaty, thereby exposing myself to the imputation of having been intimidated by party clamor from the discharge of a public duty, an imputation contrary to the truth, a thought abhorrent to my feelings and to my nature, and now he has written and published this!"

Washington held in his hand Randolph's pamphlet, and as he threw it down he burst into a flood of terrible denunciation. Then his temper grew calm as quickly as it had risen, and Randolph became a person not to be thought of again.

Before his death Randolph said to one of Wash-

ington's nephews: "If I could now present myself before your venerated uncle, it would be my pride to confess my contrition. I wish I could recall all I said of him."

A graphic account of Washington during his Presidency has been given by a neighbor of his in Philadelphia.

"When he was elected President, he lived during the whole of the time that he was in Philadelphia nearly opposite to me. At that time I saw him almost daily. . . . He was a most elegant figure of a man, with so much dignity of manner that no person whatever could take any improper liberties with him. I have heard Mr. Robert Morris, who was as intimate with him as any man in America, say that he was the only man in whose presence he felt any awe. You would seldom see a frown or a smile on his countenance, his air was serious and reflecting, yet I have seen him laugh in the theatre heartily. . . . Commodore Barry, Major Jackson and myself were appointed a committee of the Society of the Cincinnati to wait on him with a copy of an address, and to learn when it would be convenient to wait upon him. He received us with good humor, and laughing, told us that he had heard Governor Morris say that when he knew gentlemen were going to call on him with an address,

he sent to beg they would bring the answer to it with them so that he might be spared the trouble of preparing it.

"He was in Philadelphia a short time before he died, and I thought he never looked better than he did at that time. He was called the American Fabius, but Fabius was not the equal of George Washington. He suffered Tarentum to be pillaged when it was traitorously delivered to him, and his opposition and jealousy of Scipio rendered the Roman unequal to the American hero."

Still another bitter critic of Washington was Thomas Paine, a man of humble origin but great abilities. A Quaker, born in England, and early in life a sailor and a stay-maker, he met in London Benjamin Franklin, who advised him to come to America, and he arrived in Philadelphia in December, 1774. Like all good immigrants, Paine was ready to do anything for a living, and was fortunate in being appointed, almost at once, editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*. In that periodical and in pamphlets he poured out his thoughts with great industry, and they were all eloquent for freedom and the rights of man. His way of saying things was so sensible and at the same time so persuasive that he rarely missed his mark. His books sold by the hundreds of thousands, and he

became one of the most prominent figures in the Revolutionary War.

Not content with his activities here, he went back to England, and made trouble for the government there.

"Tom Paine is quite right," said the English Prime Minister, "but what am I to do? As things are, if I were to encourage his opinions we should have a bloody revolution."

Paine narrowly escaped the doom of traitors in the Tower of London, and made his way into France, where, so well known had this humble stay-maker become, he was received with great honors. Though he did not know the French language, and needed an interpreter, he was elected to political office there, and exciting the suspicions of Robespierre, he was thrown into prison, escaping the guillotine by a mere chance.

Many of his speeches and his writings were beautiful. Of the struggle between England and America he said, "Arms must decide the contest. The sun never shone on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent — of at least one-eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not a concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity is involved in it even to the end of time. Freedom

hath been hunted round the globe; Asia and Africa have long expelled her; Europe regards her as a stranger, and England has given her warning to depart. Oh, receive the fugitive and prepare an asylum for mankind!"

His attacks on Washington may be attributed not to malice and not to envy, but to an honest misunderstanding due to the difference in the ideas of the two men. Washington himself praised Thomas Paine's abilities.

## CHAPTER XVII

### The Indian Wars

Let us now return to Washington as President. His burdens in that office were heavier than those of any other president, except Lincoln. The country was in great disorder, almost in a state of anarchy. Sometimes it appeared as if the government could not go on and that the union of the states must break up because of the differences between them. There were loud dissensions between those who believed in the supremacy of each state and those who insisted on the superiority of the whole to any part. Only a very great man could have saved them from disruption, and from that disaster they were saved by Washington's genius, his patience, his firmness, his shrewdness, his devotion, and his unwavering fidelity. Naturally a simple man, he yet upheld the dignity of his position on all occasions. Never had helmsman a steadier hand or clearer eye than his.

Washington made a trip through New England

and, of course, expected the governor of Massachusetts to call on him when he reached Boston. The holder of that office at the time was John Hancock, whose signature is so conspicuous in the Declaration of Independence. From that signature it is easy to surmise Hancock's character. He was arrogant, bumptious, and jealous. Instead of calling on the President, he waited for the President to call on him. But Washington would not be treated in that way, and stood on his dignity. At the eleventh hour Hancock saw his mistake. He wrote an apologetic letter to Washington, asking if he might call on him within half an hour, though it would be at the hazard of his health, for he was a great sufferer from gout. Washington answered at once, expressing his willingness to see him, but begging him, with a touch of irony, not to do anything that might endanger his health. So Hancock came and made his call.

It was a question of etiquette, nothing more, but Washington was exacting in such matters.

"How," says Senator Lodge, "the general government would have sunk in popular estimation if the President had not asserted, with perfect dignity and yet entire firmness, its position! Men are governed largely by impressions, and Washington knew it. Hence his settling at once

and forever the question of precedence between the Union and the States. Everywhere and at all times, according to his doctrine, the nation was to be first."

When the Indians were giving trouble, Major General Arthur St. Clair was appointed to subjugate them. Before he started he had a long interview with Washington who especially warned him against ambuscaders.

He was overwhelmed, however, and sent word to Washington of his defeat. When the messenger arrived, Washington was entertaining a dinner party and was denied to him. The servant and Washington's secretary offered to take in any message he had, but he insisted that he could communicate only with the President himself.

At last Washington came out, and took from the messenger the dispatch containing news of the disaster. He said not a word, but went back to the dinner table, as if nothing had happened, and afterwards attended his wife's reception, showing his customary suavity in talking to the guests. Not until the last of them had gone did he show the slightest agitation.

Then he suddenly broke out: "It's all over — St. Clair's defeated, routed; the officers nearly all killed; the men by wholesale; the rout com-

pleted — too shocking to think of — and a surprise into the bargain."

He strode up and down the room in anguish, and by and by burst forth into a torrent of wrath.

"Here in this very spot I took leave of him; I wished him success and honor. 'You have your instructions from the Secretary of War,' I said. 'I have a strict eye to them, and I will add but one word — beware of a surprise. I repeat it: beware of a surprise. You know how the Indians fight us!' He was off with that as my last solemn warning thrown into his ears. And yet! to suffer that army to be cut to pieces, hacked, butchered, tomahawked by a surprise — the very thing I guarded him against! . . . How can he answer for it to his country! The blood of the slain is upon him — the curse of the widows and orphans — the curse of Heaven!"

He sat down on the sofa and relapsed into silence, which he maintained for some time. Then he murmured, "The news must not go beyond this room," and, recovering his self-possession, "General St. Clair shall have justice. I have been hasty, I looked hurriedly through the dispatches, but did not see all the particulars. I will hear him without prejudice; he shall have full justice."

The storm was over, and no further sign of it was ever seen or heard in his manner or conversation. The case was investigated by Congress. St. Clair was exculpated and taken back to Washington's confidence. He had put himself in the thickest of the fight and escaped unhurt, though unable to mount his horse without help and so ill that he had to be carried on a litter.

Washington was the pilot as well as the helmsman of the ship of state, and but for him that vessel must have been wrecked. He steered it through many perilous channels, and through many storms in which it again and again threatened to founder. To his sagacity alone was due its arrival in port, with all hands in safety and flying colors.

His first cabinet included some of the ablest men in the country. For the position of Attorney-General he chose Edmund Randolph, who came from one of the oldest Virginia families, and who had been governor of that state. The secretaryship of War he gave to General Henry Knox, the former bookseller of Boston, who had been so useful during the revolution. For the secretaryship of the Treasury he chose Alexander Hamilton, and for the highest place of all, the State Department, he chose Thomas Jefferson,

who himself became third President of the United States.

Jefferson received his appointment, like the others, not through favoritism, but because he was the best man for it. The others were all warm friends of Washington; Jefferson never displayed anything like affection for him, nor did Washington ever display more than a dignified appreciation of Jefferson. The two men differed in their views, and in a sense belonged to different parties. Washington was a federalist, or one who believed in the nation, in its superiority to the states; Jefferson advocated the rights of the states separately as against the supremacy of the nation. Each appreciated the abilities of the other, but no love was lost between them. Jefferson had less modesty than Washington, but he had a right to a high opinion of himself. He was a Virginian of good family, similar in position to that of Washington, his father having been a planter, and was the third child and eldest son.

Graduating from William and Mary College, he became a lawyer, and was a member of the House of Burgesses on that famous occasion when Patrick Henry delivered his "liberty or death" speech, and Lord Dunmore dismissed them with threats of prosecution for treason. Always orderly and dignified, he had much of Washington's stateliness,

and a profound faith in the merits of democracy. Indeed, in some ways he was more democratic than Washington himself. Though he was nothing of an orator, he wrote in stately periods and was the author of the Declaration of Independence. He too was tall and handsome, a man of the greatest integrity and the loftiest principles. When he died he left this inscription for his tomb: "Here lies buried Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia." He was buried in the grounds of his magnificent estate, Monticello, near Charlottesville, Virginia, and his beautiful house is to-day in almost the identical condition as when he died. No essential change has been made in all the intervening years.

One of the earliest difficulties of the Cabinet was with the Indians, who though driven out of the Atlantic states were still on the warpath west of the Alleghanies. There they menaced the frontier, and held back the whites, who were eager to advance westward. Washington was one of the few men who knew them well. He had been familiar with them in peace and had fought with them over and over again.

Peace reigned in New York but in Kentucky

a war was in progress between the Wabash Indians and the whites, who in reprisal punished other tribes indiscriminately; then Choctaws, Cherokees, and Creeks united and were led by a Scotch half-breed named Alexander McGillivray. No doubt they had been treated unjustly.

"Washington," says Senator Lodge, "was both angered and disheartened by the conduct of the states and of the frontier settlers. . . . Those very men who shot Indians at sight, and plundered them of their lands, were the first to cry out for aid from the general government when a war, brought about usually by their own violation of the treaties of the United States, was upon them. On the other hand, the Indians themselves were warlike and quarrelsome."

It was then that the defeat of St. Clair occurred, that disaster which moved Washington so deeply. St. Clair had left Cincinnati with two thousand men, with orders to build a line of forts. Pushing slowly on until he reached the head-waters of the Wabash, he was joined by some disorderly and undisciplined Kentucky militia. Sixty of them deserted, and it became necessary to send a regiment after them to keep them from plundering the baggage trains.

Nevertheless St. Clair held to his course and

reached his last camp with about fourteen hundred men. At sunrise the next day the Indians surprised him, only about a thousand of them against his fourteen hundred, and yet he was obliged to fly with a loss of nine hundred!

Panic seized the frontier, and another increase of the army was ordered. Anthony Wayne was put in charge. He was another able general who had been in many Revolutionary battles, victor in some and deserving praise even in his defeats. Washington called him a "prudent man," yet the rather misleading popular name for him, "Mad Anthony," was given to him for the daring of many of his exploits.

Wayne led an army to a point six miles beyond Fort Jefferson, in the autumn of 1793, and went into winter quarters. Early in the following year he advanced to the scene of St. Clair's defeat, where he met the Indians and repulsed them after two days of fighting. He then marched to their villages and burned them. One victory was quickly followed by another, and in the end he forced on them a treaty of peace.

This peace in the West and North did not prevail in the South, however. There the Georgians still assailed the red men, generally choosing the peacefully-disposed tribes as their victims, and

the state of Georgia itself violated all the treaties made by the central government and carried on a constant war with the usual accompaniments of fire, murder, and pillage.

All through these trying times Washington was often held responsible for the trouble. "No one," says Senator Lodge, "understood that here was an important part of a scheme to build up a nation, to make all the movements of the United States broad and national, and to open the vast West to the people who were to make it theirs. Washington heard all the criticism and saw all the opposition, and still pressed forward to the goal, not attaining all he wished, but fighting in a very clear and manful spirit, and not laboring in vain."

Washington was now sixty-one years old, and he often sighed for the tranquillity of home, where we catch an occasional glimpse of him in harbor, as it were, after all the laboring of the ship of state through stormy seas.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### Second Term as President

All the honors worth living for Washington had enjoyed, but much had he endured in winning them. There remained difficulties in his cabinet now, especially between Hamilton and Jefferson.

"I would rather go to my farm, take my spade in my hand, and work for my bread than remain where I am," he complained in a fit of despondency.

But soon after saying this he allowed himself to be elected President for a second term, and he wrote to the governor of Virginia, "That the prospect before us is, as you justly observe, fair, none can deny, but what use we shall make of it is exceedingly problematical; not but that I believe all things will come right at last, but like a young heir come a little prematurely to a large inheritance, we shall wanton and run riot until we have brought our reputation to the brink of ruin, and then like him shall have to labor with the current of opinion, when compelled, perhaps, to do what prudent

and common policy pointed out as plain as any problem in Euclid in the first instance."

Meanwhile the country was growing with rapid strides, and immigrants arrived in increasing numbers from nearly all parts of Europe, and especially from Germany and Ireland. Dr. James Schouler has sketched the farmer's progress thus: —

"After buying his land and taking possession in the spring, the farmer would cut down a few trees to build himself and his family a temporary home. His neighbors, if there were any for miles about, good-naturedly lent their assistance, and in three or four days a building of unhewn logs rose ready for habitation. Roughly put together, the interstices stopped with rails, calked with straw or moss and daubed with mud, and the roof covered with nothing better than thin staves split out of oakwood and fastened on by heavy poles, such a dwelling was a 'log cabin'; but a house of a better sort, especially if made of hewn logs, having the crannies neatly stopped with stone and plaster, and a shingled roof, would be styled a 'log house.'"

At its door any bright afternoon might be seen a healthy woman, awaiting her husband's return, and dressed to please him, who dandled a baby in her arms, while handsome boys and girls played before her. All around the little home was the vast American forest, in which the husband worked

hard to make a clearing, and the ring of his ax was the music of civilization's advancing hosts.

A prudent settler never uprooted his large trees, for the labor would come to more than the land was worth; he cut them off two or three feet from the ground, and then left the stumps to decay at leisure. It would be ten years, perhaps, in New York and Pennsylvania, before such stumps would rot away; farther south the process was more rapid, and the land reclaimed was very rich.

Turning his new soil in May with a plowshare or harrow, the settler dropped Indian corn into the earth, and was gladdened by a large harvest in October. A store of cornmeal and hominy was thus laid by for family consumption, with abundant provender besides for cattle and poultry. His sheep and hogs ranged the forest for their food.

For a few years it was a rough and lonely life. The father and his sons had to roam the woods with dog and gun, to shoot deer, raccoons, and squirrels for fresh meat, bartering off their skins at the nearest store in order to procure clothing, tea, and sugar for the household.

As years went on the land was cleared, and wheat, tobacco, and other products were added to the crops. The family became prosperous. Other immigrants made their homes in the vicinity.

The wilderness became a settlement. A sawmill was built, and at length the intrepid and industrious settler moved from the log cabin into a much finer and more commodious house.

His recreation and the recreation of his sons was furnished by his gun. The only bird he cared to pursue was the wild turkey, though he often hunted deer, beaver, or bears. As a mere frolic he went after the gray squirrel. There was no meat more delicious to the settler than squirrel, roasted or stewed.

While the country was thus growing, Washington was so much abused for the treaty he made with England that he exclaimed, "Such exaggerated and indecent terms could scarcely be applied to a Nero, a notorious defaulter, or even to a common pickpocket." But, as Woodrow Wilson says, the men who sneered and stormed, talked of usurpation and impeachment, called him base, incompetent, treacherous even, were permitted to see not so much as the quiver of an eyelid as they watched him go steadily from step to step in the course he had chosen.

Shame finally came upon the men who had abused him. The people would have had him accept a third term, but he felt that he had served them long enough. He had made the nation

secure and prosperous, and saw that his dream of the expansion of the West and Southwest would come true. The thirteen loosely associated states had unified themselves in a powerful whole.

When he resigned his office to John Adams, a scene occurred which removed all doubt as to his standing with the people. A crowd assembled to witness the inauguration, but few paid any attention to Adams. All eyes were bent upon the stately and impressive figure of Washington in black velvet with a sword hanging at his side.

"No one," says Mr. Wilson, "stirred till he had left the room to follow and pay his respects to the new President. Then they and all the crowd in the streets moved after him, an immense company going as one man, in total silence, his escort all the way. He turned upon the threshold of the President's lodgings and looked, as if for the last time, upon this multitude of nameless friends. No man ever saw him so moved. The tears rolled unchecked down his cheeks, and when at last he went within, a great, smothered, common voice went through the stirred throng as if they sobbed to see their hero go from their sight forever."

## CHAPTER XIX

### Last Days at Mount Vernon

In bequeathing his swords, Washington wrote in his will for those who inherited them, "These swords are accompanied with an injunction not to unsheath them for the purpose of shedding blood except for self-defense, or in defense of their country, or its rights, and in the latter case to keep them unsheathed, and prefer falling with them in their hands to the relinquishment thereof."

At the end of his second term as President, an effort was made to have him seek a third term, but he refused. He opened the way for John Adams to succeed him, and then retired to his beloved Mount Vernon.

"The remainder of my life (which in the course of nature cannot be long)," he said, "will be occupied with rural amusement, and though I shall seclude myself as much as possible from the noisy and bustling crowd, none more than myself would be regaled by the company of those I esteem, at

Mount Vernon, more than twenty miles from which, after I arrive there, it is not likely I shall ever be.

"Retired from noise myself, and the responsibility attached to public employment, my hours will glide smoothly on. My best wishes, however, for the prosperity of our country will always have the first place in my thoughts; while to repair buildings and to cultivate my farms, which require close attention, will occupy the few years, perhaps days, I may be a sojourner here, as I am now in the sixty-sixth year of my peregrination through life."

Old as he was, the threats of France led him to buckle on his sword again and to become for the second time commander in chief of the army. But the war cloud dispersed, and he was not called on afterwards for active service.

Only three years more of life on this earth remained to George Washington. He had brought up nephews, nieces, and other relatives with unfailing care and devotion; all his life he had been generous and loyal, good and true. To one who had criticized him he wrote, "Whether you have, upon any occasion, expressed yourself in disrespectful terms of me, I know not — it has never been the subject of my inquiry. If nothing impeaching my honor or honesty is said, I care

little for the rest. I have pursued my uniform course for three score years, and am happy in believing that the world has thought it a right one. Of its being so, I am so well satisfied myself that I shall not depart from it by turning either to the right or to the left until I arrive at the end of my pilgrimage."

Washington was very ceremonious at his receptions, too much so for Patrick Henry, who declined several offices, because, he said, with careless sarcasm, his habits of life unfitted him for mingling with those who were now aping the manners of a monarchy. Every Tuesday afternoon Washington held levees which began at three o'clock, and he appeared clad in black silk velvet, his hair powdered and gathered in a silk bag; with yellow gloves on his hands, and holding a cocked hat with a black cockade, and the edges adorned with a feather about an inch long. He wore knee and shoe buckles of silver and a long sword. He always stood in front of the fireplace, with his face toward the door of entrance. The visitor was led up to him and his name announced. Washington received him with a dignified bow, and allowed him to pass on without a shake of the hand.

At a quarter past three the door closed, shutting out all who were late, and then the President,

beginning on the right, moved round the room, saying a few words to each person. Having finished the circuit, he resumed his first position, and the visitors came up to him again and once more bowed and retired. In an hour the ceremony was over.

Though he was in his sixty-eighth year, Washington still kept up his habit of superintending every detail of the work on his plantations. One day, December 12, 1799, he was riding forth with that purpose in view when he was caught in a severe storm. When he reached home he was suffering from a chill which compelled him to take to his bed and doctors were summoned. We know all that happened, for his secretary, Tobias Lear, who was present, has left all the particulars. Mr. Lear proposed that he should take some medicine, but Washington answered, "No, you know I never take anything for a cold. Let it go as it came." He rapidly grew worse, breathing with difficulty, and soon was hardly able to utter a word intelligibly.

Medicine was primitive in those days, and they dosed him with various homemade mixtures. They even bled him. "Don't be afraid," he said when he saw the hesitation of the man who was to make the incision. No improvement followed the blood-letting.

They next tried blisters, gargles, and drugs such as no modern doctor would think of prescribing. The treatment probably hastened his end. Two days later, with his finger on his own pulse, Washington expired without a struggle or a sigh.

It was Henry Lee ("Light Horse Harry," the father of the illustrious General Robert E. Lee) who delivered the funeral oration on Washington, in which occurs the memorable and oft-quoted words, "First in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen."

"First in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen, he was second to none in the humble and endearing scenes of private life. Pious, just, humane, temperate and sincere, dignified and commanding, his example was as edifying to all around him as were the effects of that example lasting. To his equals he was condescending, to his inferiors kind, and to the dear object of his affections exemplarily tender. Vice shuddered in his presence and virtue always felt his fostering hand. The purity of his private character gave effulgence to his public virtues.

"His last scene comported with the whole tenor of his life. Although in extreme pain, not a sigh nor a groan escaped him; and with undisturbed serenity he closed his well-spent life. Such was the

man America has lost! Such was the man for whom our nation mourns.

"Methinks I see his august image and hear falling from his venerable lips, these deep, sinking words: 'Cease, sons of America, lamenting our separation. Go on, and confirm by your wisdom the fruits of our joint councils, joint efforts, and common dangers. Reverence religion; diffuse knowledge throughout your land; patronize the arts and sciences; let liberty and order be inseparable companions; control party spirit, the bane of free government; observe good faith to and cultivate peace with all foreign nations; shut up every avenue to foreign influence; contract rather than extend natural connections; rely on yourselves only; be American in thought and deed. Thus will you give immortality to that union which was the constant object of my terrestrial labors; thus will you preserve undisturbed to the latest posterity the felicity of a people to me most dear; and thus you will supply (if my happiness is aught to you) the only vacancy in the round of pure bliss high heaven bestows.'"

An eloquent tribute to Washington has been paid by Henry Cabot Lodge: —

"I see in Washington a great soldier, who fought a trying war to a successful end impossible without

him; a great statesman who did more than all other men to lay the foundations of a republic which has endured in prosperity for more than a century. I find in him a marvelous judgment which was never at fault, a penetrating vision which beheld the future of America when it was dim to other eyes, a great intellectual force, a will of iron, an unyielding grasp of facts and an unequaled strength of patriotic purpose. I see in him too a pure and high-minded gentleman of dauntless courage and stainless honor, simple and stately of manner, kind and generous of heart. Such he was in truth. The historian and the biographer may fail to do him justice, but the instinct of mankind will not fail. The real hero needs not book to give him worshipers. George Washington will hold the love and reverence of men because they see embodied in him the noblest possibilities of humanity."

Surely there has been no nobler man in history than George Washington. His one thought and only aim were to benefit his country. His simplicity was as great as his genius. No self-seeking ever appeared in his character. He was without vanity and without jealousy, a man who surrendered himself, heart and soul, that human freedom should endure forever. Kingship was nothing to him,

and nothing ever drew him aside from the generous object he cherished above all others.

I take the words following from a speech made by Daniel Webster: — "Born upon our soil — of parents also born upon it — never for a moment having had sight of the old world — instructed according to the modes of his time, only in the spare, plain, but wholesome elementary knowledge which our institutions provide for the children of the people — growing up beneath and penetrated by the genuine influences of American society — living from infancy to manhood and age amidst our expanding, but not luxurious civilization — partaking in our great destiny of labor, our long contest with unreclaimed nature and uncivilized man — our agony of glory, the War of Independence — our great victory of peace, the formation of the Union, and the establishment of the Constitution, — he is all — all our own! Washington is ours."

Thus ended the life of one who in all ways takes a first place in the pages of history. Search where we will, we cannot find another to compare with Washington. He was almost entirely without blemish, and yet entirely human. As nearly blameless as a man can be, he yet was indulgent to the faults of others, generous to his enemies,

devoted to his friends. Malignity was foreign to him. Under persecution he sought no reprisal and easily forgave. From his earliest boyhood to his last day on earth, he was controlled in his thoughts and in his actions by an imperative, unabatable, and steadfast sense of honor and duty. His conscience never slept, even in the smallest of his transactions. Nothing which involved honor was a trifle to him, nothing a trifle to him that was not weighed by the standard of his responsibility for it. Before duty he invariably bowed his head, and picked up without the faintest protest any task it called for. In the lesser things as in the greater, he never allowed himself to decide on their merits until he had appraised them by the threefold measure of duty to himself, duty to his fellow-man, and duty to God. Observe him from whatever angle or position we may, he outshines the other great characters of history, not by his abilities alone but also by his flawless integrity. Had he lived in earlier days he would have been canonized as a saint. His military valor was never selfish and cruel, like Napoleon's or Marlborough's; his statesmanship was unsoiled by the wiles of the politician; his relationship with his family and friends was full of deep and unchanging affection. See his infinite variety! Whatever he undertook

he did well, whether it was the work of a farmer, or that of a general, or that of the President of the United States. Well may we feel thrills of pride and gratitude when we say with Daniel Webster, "Washington is our's," for Washington is the chief ornament of our national history.